



















THE FIRST BOOK AND THE SECOND

BY

# ELOHIM REVEALED

BY

CHARLES J. DAVIS, D.D.

WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION  
BY THE AUTHOR

The Elohim Revealed

CHARLES J. DAVIS, D.D.

Author of "The Elohim Revealed," "The Elohim Revealed," etc.

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THE FIRST ADAM AND THE SECOND.

THE

## ELOHIM REVEALED

IN THE

CREATION AND REDEMPTION OF MAN.

נִיאָקֶר אֱלֹהִים וְנִאָשָׁה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדִמְיֻתֵנוּ—Gen. i. 26.

θεὸς ἐψανερώθη ἐν σαρκί.—1 Tim. iii. 16.

BY

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PHILADELPHIA:

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E. H. Rowley

TO

MY BELOVED AND VENERATED MOTHER,

ESTHER THOMPSON BAIRD,

IS INSCRIBED

THIS ATTEMPT TO EXHIBIT SOME OF THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST,  
THE PRINCIPLES OF WHICH WERE LEARNED AT HER FEET,  
FROM THE WESTMINSTER CATECHISMS AND THE WORD OF GOD,  
AND DEVELOPED IN THEIR HARMONIOUS PROPORTIONS  
IN THE SABBATH EVENING FAMILY EXPOSITIONS OF

A FATHER

WHOSE FAITH IS LONG SINCE LOST IN VISION.

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## PREFACE.

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THE Delphic motto, "Know thyself," is the utmost achievement of classic philosophy. It is the first principle of the doctrine of Christ,—the starting point to the higher knowledge of God and his Son. And, whilst philosophy exhausts itself in constructing the maxim, and utterly fails to show how we may come to self-knowledge, the gospel proclaims Him in whose glorious person man is one with Jehovah,—without whom we can know neither ourselves nor God; and, knowing whom, we have all knowledge. The apostasy of man, the corruption and depravity into which he plunged himself by his rebellion, and the curse thereby incurred from a God of holiness and truth, are the cardinal facts which lie at the basis of the whole saving doctrine of the Scriptures;—facts which, if misunderstood or ignored, the word of God is a riddle; if denied, the very person of Christ is a lie. The doctrine, therefore, of original sin, has ever been held, by the church of God, to be fundamental to the whole system of truth; and every attempt to pervert that doctrine, or to set it aside, has been justly regarded as heresy, fraught with the most fatal consequences to the scheme of grace and the souls of men. A testimony to doctrines so important can never be unseasonable; and is, perhaps, especially appropriate to the present time, when we have increasing evidence of defection from these doctrines, among some of our American churches, which once gloried in the faith they now disown, and were set for the defence of the truth which they now reject and assail.

At an early date in the ministry of the author, he began to prepare what was designed to be a brief treatise on the doctrine of Christ, viewed as the progressive unfolding of an eternal plan for the revelation of the Most High. Other cares and labours interposed, and the work was laid aside. More recently, circumstances of special interest to him, but of no moment to the public, determined him to utter a testimony to some of the doctrines which are set forth in this work. At first no more was designed than a very brief exposition of some cardinal points. But, as he proceeded, the theme expanded; and the importance of the topics, the impossibility of doing them justice in a brief discussion, and the delight enjoyed in contemplating the scheme of God, of which they constitute the chief elements, have insensibly controlled the pen, until the present volume is the result.

It has been remarked, by one of the most eminent of our noble brotherhood of divines, that "we want some central principle, which embraces





equally the religion of nature and the religion of grace. Until some such central principle is developed in its all-comprehensive relations, we are obliged to have a twofold theology, as we have a twofold religion,—a covenant of works and a covenant of grace, with no bridge between them.\* The doctrine which is illustrated in the present work,—that of God revealed through an eternal plan,—presents itself to the mind of the writer as being the desideratum here indicated; as that around which all doctrinal truths cluster and shine in a light and harmony not otherwise discoverable. It is not, however, as an exhibition of systematic theology, in this light, that the writer lays his present offering at the feet of the church of Christ. But, looking upon this as the true point, from which to view the related doctrines of the ruin and recovery of man,—the catastrophe of the first Adam and the redeeming work of the second,—he has constructed the argument, on these subjects, in accordance with that idea; and only appealed to the other leading features of the system of truth for the illustration of these.

The fragmentary manner in which the work has been written,—at times snatched from pastoral and other labours and cares, and other causes,—have necessarily induced many imperfections and defects. Nor would the author venture before the public in a form so imperfect, did he not hope that, with all, his offering may be acceptable to Christ, and advantageous to his church and cause.

Trained from my childhood in the love of the doctrines of the Westminster Confession,—confirmed, by the results of my maturest studies, in the conviction that they are in thorough accordance with the word of God,—I have not attempted to conceal the fervour of a devoted zeal in their behalf; nor to imitate that charity which consists in indifference to the loveliness of the truth and the deformity of error. Constrained, on some points, to differ with brethren and fathers beloved and venerated in our own church,—the candour and directness, which the importance of the questions seemed to demand, have not, I trust, been inconsistent with that respect and deference which I cordially cherish for men at whose feet I should be happy to sit.

The introductory chapter is designed to exhibit the position which has been occupied by the church, from age to age, on the subject of original sin. The graces of composition have been cheerfully sacrificed to this object. My authorities, besides those marginally acknowledged, are, the *Corpus et Synagma Confessionum*, by Gaspar Laurentius, Geneva, 1612, and the *Collectio Confessionum*, by Niemeyer.

The fruit and the solace of many toilsome hours is now committed to the candour of the Christian public,—not without the earnest hope and the prayer that He in whose fear it has been written will accept it to his own glory, and the furtherance of his cause.

\* Southern Presbyterian Review, 1858, vol. x. p. 619.

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## INTRODUCTION.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN.

## § 1.

THE Church of God has been called to engage in a continual conflict, not only with external enemies, but, much more, with corruptions and heresies within her own bosom. The whole scheme of grace was devised for the purpose of revealing to the creatures the truth concerning the nature and perfections of God; and it is carried on through a testimony thereto. The principal exertions, therefore, of the father of lies have always been directed to the object of silencing or corrupting the church,—which is the pillar and ground of the truth,—so as to prevent her testimony to that doctrine which is according to godliness, by the instrumentality of which his sceptre is broken and his slaves set free. At the same time, the King of Zion, who is Head over all things to the church, has permitted and overruled these machinations of the Serpent, so as to induce among his own people a clearer apprehension, and more affectionate embrace, of the truth. As often as the spirit of error has come in, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against it. All needful truth was, from the beginning, deposited in the sacred oracles. But much of the testimony therein contained has always lain unapprehended, until the oppositions of false science have brought it into question. Then has been fulfilled the promise of our Saviour:—"When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."—John xvi. 13. Thus, from age to age, has the doctrine of God been gradually unfolded in clearer light, and comprehended in a growing fulness by the true Israel of God.

Of this mode of the divine economy, the history of the doctrine of Original Sin presents an interesting example. The essential principles of this doctrine were indeed held from the beginning; but their precise significance, relations and boundaries, in the system of truth, have only been recognised and defined by a gradual process, through many conflicts with grievous heresies.



§ 2. *Doctrine of Tertullian.*

The earliest post-apostolic exposition of the doctrine of our relation to the sin of Adam occurs in the works of Tertullian. This writer, having attained to a great age, died about the year 220; so that his career must have commenced within some fifty years of the death of the apostle John. He was one of the most learned and excellent of the Fathers, against whom the impeachment of Montanism seems merely to indicate the zeal with which he maintained a protest in behalf of spiritual religion, in opposition to a lifeless formalism, a reliance on outward rites and relations,—that mystery of iniquity, which already wrought with great vigour, in his time. Whatever weight, however, may be given by any one to the imputation here alluded to, it is entitled to no consideration as affecting his competence to testify as to the orthodox doctrine of original sin. The writings from which we make the following quotations are of a date prior to the time of his supposed defection to the party of Montanus, and hold no special relation to the peculiarities of that party. In fact, so highly were these writings esteemed, that Cyprian, the eminent bishop of Carthage, was accustomed to read a portion of them daily, and never designated him by any other title than that of "the master." "His diction, and his spirit too, it has been supposed, were extensively propagated in the Latin church."<sup>\*</sup>

The doctrine of original sin which is found in the writings of Tertullian is briefly this. Adam was created at first in the image of God, subject to the law, and with liberty of will, and power to keep it or to transgress. The divine image, in which he was made, consisted in the endowments of his soul, chief among which was his freedom of will. In his person was embodied the nature of the entire race; he was the fountain of the existence of all his offspring, who derive from him the being alike of body and soul; both of which flow from him by generation, and with which they derive a part in his nature. As thus constituted, Adam, and in him the race, transgressed the law, and came under the curse of God. The transgression consisted, formally, in plucking the forbidden fruit; essentially, in setting his will in opposition to the will of God. The result of the transgression is, the subjection of the nature of man to a power which is alien from God,—the enslaving of his powers to the god of this world. The consequence is, that the nature, thus depraved, is prone only to evil; and it is therefore impossible that the corrupted tree should bear good fruit. The apostate heart cannot produce the works of holiness. But that which is impossible to man is possible with God, who can even of stones raise up children unto Abraham.

Appropriating the name, spirit, to God alone, and designating the soul of man as an *afflatus* from God, Tertullian says of man's original estate,

\* Murdock's Mosheim, vol. i. p. 122, note.

"The image cannot in all respects equal the reality. For it is one thing to be like the reality; another, to be the very reality. So, also, the *afflatus*, since it is but the image of the Spirit, cannot present such a likeness of God, that inasmuch as the original, that is, the Spirit which is God, is without sin, therefore the image, the *afflatus*, must be held incapable of sin. In this, the image is inferior to the original,—the *afflatus* less excellent than the Spirit; yet having the very lineaments of God, inasmuch as the soul was immortal; as it was free, and subject to its own will; as it was prescient of many things, rational, and capable of apprehension and knowledge. Nevertheless, in these things it was but an image, and not endowed with the very energy of divinity. So neither was it beyond the reach of apostasy; because this is peculiar to God, the original; and not characteristic of the image."<sup>\*</sup> "I find man created by God, free, and subject to his own will and power; and perceive in him no nearer image and likeness of God, than the structure of this constitution. For in features and corporeal lineaments, which are so various in the human race, he does not exhibit a representation of God, whose likeness is one; but in that substance which he derived from God himself, that is, his soul, conformed to the image of God, and enstamped with liberty and power of his own will. This state of liberty was confirmed by the very law which was given him by God. For a law would not have been set before one who had not in himself power to render the obedience which the law required. Nor would death have been threatened against transgression, if disregard of the law had not been predicable of the liberty of man's will."<sup>†</sup> "Man would have been good, if he had acted in conformity, indeed, with the will of God, but by the exercise of his own will, as flowing from the disposition of his nature. On the contrary, he would more clearly appear to be evil, (for this also God anticipated,) by virtue of his being free, and under his own power. And but for this provision, as he would not have embraced that which is right, voluntarily, but of necessity, so also he would have been subject to be overcome of evil, by reason of the infirmity of his servile condition; being alike a slave, whether to good or evil. Entire liberty of will was therefore given to him, in respect both to good and evil; that he might always be his own master; alike spontaneously doing the right and avoiding the wrong. And since man was responsible to the bar of God, it behooved that he should work righteousness by the rectitude of his will, to wit, freely. Further, neither the rewards of good nor evil deeds may be assigned to him who is found to have been good or evil not voluntarily, but of necessity. To this end also the law was ordained; not precluding but proving liberty, by obedience spontaneously rendered, or transgression spontaneously wrought. Thus, in any event the liberty of the will is manifested."<sup>‡</sup>

\* Tertullianus adv. Marcionem, lib. ii. 9.

† Ibid. 5.

‡ Ibid. 2.





In respect to the relation of the will of God to the apostasy, Tertullian urges, that "it will justify every crime to assert nothing to happen without the approval of God. And the statement leads to the destruction of all morality, even that of God himself,—that any thing which he does not approve may be brought to pass by his will, or that nothing occurs which he does not approve. For since he forbids certain things, and threatens them with eternal punishment, he certainly does not will what he thus denounces, and with which he is offended. On the contrary, what he wills, he both commands, and treats with acceptance, and distinguishes with eternal blessedness. Whilst, therefore, we learn from his precepts, what he approves and condemns; the will and power of choosing the one or the other, belong to us; as it is written, 'Behold, I have set before thee good and evil,' for thou hast tasted of the tree of knowledge. . . . Moreover, if you ask, whence is that will by which we choose that which is opposed to the will of God; I answer, From ourselves. Nor do I speak lightly, (*semini enim tuo respondeas necesse est*,) for you must answer for the blood which you inherit; since he, (*princeps generis et delicti*,) the author both of the race and of the apostasy, Adam, chose the transgression which he committed. Nor did the devil infuse into him the will to sin; but only furnished occasion for the action of his own will."

Of the apostasy, he says that "brutish man, not receiving the things of the Spirit, accounted the law of God foolishness, and transgressed it. Wherefore, not having faith, even that which he seemed to have was taken from him; to wit, the possession of the garden, and communion with God, through which he would have known all the things of God, had he continued in obedience. What wonder, therefore, if—his works being returned upon himself, and he (*in ergastulum terræ laborandæ relegatus*) confined in the bonds of earthly toil, and by his own deed debased and bowed down to the dust—he has thence transmitted to his entire race the common spirit of the world, altogether carnal and heretical, not receiving the things of God? For who will hesitate to designate as heresy the crime which Adam committed, by following the bent of his own choice, rather than the mind of God?"†

In the doctrine thus stated by Tertullian, and his kindred theory as to the origin of the soul, he seems truly to represent the theology of his age. We are aware that it is sometimes asserted that his doctrine was peculiar to himself, and not commonly held by the orthodox of his time. But we have failed to find a trace of evidence in support of the assertion. In his discussions, he assumes the position of an expounder and defender of the common faith on the subject, against the theories of philosophers and naturalists.‡ He opposes the doctrine of Plato, as affording

\* Tertul. De Exhort. Cast. § 2.

† Ibid. 2.

‡ Tertul. De Anima, 3, 4.

nourishment to every class of heretics,\* and in all his discussions assumes the acquiescence of all Christians. Proposing to prove the generative origin of the soul, he says that it is immaterial from what quarter the question arises, "whether from philosophers, heretics, or the ignorant populace. It is of no importance, to the professors of the truth, who its enemies are, especially since, with such audacity, they deny the soul to be conceived in the womb, and assert it to be inserted from without into the body at the instant of birth." Entering upon the argument,—after a few sentences addressed to the Platonic philosophers, he turns to his brethren:—"I will pause in the argument, that what I answer to philosophers and naturalists I may prove to the Christian. For yourself, my brother, build your faith upon the foundation," &c. He sketches a rapid argument from the Scriptures, from which he derives the result that "from one man have flowed the souls of all, nature obeying the original decree, 'Be fruitful, and multiply;' for, in the very preface to the creation of the first man, his entire posterity is spoken of in the plural:—'Let us make man, and let *them* have dominion.'"<sup>†</sup> He then returns to the doctrines of the various schools of Greek philosophy, and engages in an extended discussion, at the close of which he concludes, that, "in view of the ambitious theories of philosophers and heretics, and the stupid doctrine of Plato, we have proved the soul to be generated in and of man himself, and that there was, from the beginning, one seed of it, as also of the flesh of the whole race."<sup>‡</sup> There seems to be no reason to doubt that this was the common doctrine of the church in that age.

Of the depravity resulting from the apostasy, Tertullian says that "evil has possession of the soul, from the vice of origin, derived by nature, beside that which results from the entrance of the spirit of evil. For, as we may say, corruption of nature is another nature, having its own god and father, the author of the corruption himself; yet so that there still remains good in the soul,—that original, divine and legitimate good which belongs to its very nature. For that which is from God is not so much extinguished as obscured; for it can be obscured, since it is not God, but it cannot be extinguished, because it is from God. Hence, as light, intercepted by any obstacle, remains, although invisible, if the intervening substance be sufficiently dense,—so also the good which is in the soul, overborne by evil, by virtue of its nature, is either wholly inactive, its light being hidden, or, finding liberty, shines where it may. Thus, there are the vile and the holy; but yet the souls are all of one race. So, too, in the worst there is some good, and in the best some evil; for God only is without sin, and Christ is the only sinless man, because he is also God. . . . Therefore, when a renewed soul acquires faith, by the new birth of water and the power of God, the veil of his former corruption being removed, he sheds abroad all his light. He is also per-

\* De Anima, 23, 25.

† Ibid. 25-27.

‡ Ibid. 36.



vaded by the Holy Spirit, as, from his former nativity, by a profane spirit."\*

‡ 3. *Hilary of Poitiers, and Ambrose of Milan.*

Hilary became bishop of Poitiers, in France, about the year 350. He was one of the most eminent men of the age, and stood conspicuous in his labours against Arian heresy. In his works the doctrine of the apostasy is identical with that of Tertullian. In his commentary upon Matthew xviii. 12 he says, "By the one sheep, man is to be understood, and (sub homine uno, universitas sentienda est) under the figure of one man is to be recognised the whole human species; for in the apostasy of the one Adam the entire race of man apostatized."† Allegorizing our Saviour's parable of the divided house, (Matt. x. 34 and Luke xii. 52.) he says, "Here, therefore, are five dwelling in one house, divided three against two and two against three. But we only find in man three; that is, body, soul and will. For as the soul is given to the body, so also the power is given to each of employing itself as it will. . . . But, from the sin and unbelief of our first parents to subsequent generations, sin began to be the father of our bodies, and unbelief the mother of our souls; for from these, through the transgression of our first parents, we receive our origin. But the will is present to all. Therefore, now in one house there are five: sin, the father of the body, unbelief, the mother of the soul, and the authority of the will, which binds the whole man to itself by a kind of conjugal right."‡

Similar is the doctrine of Ambrose, bishop of Milan from 374 to 397:—"He, the first sinner of our race, (and, oh that he had been the only one!) before he had sinned, did not perceive himself to be naked, but after he had sinned he saw himself to be so; and therefore thought to cover himself with fig-leaves, because he found himself to be naked. He therefore made himself naked when he made himself guilty of crime. In him the whole human condition (omnis humana conditio) was made bare,—obnoxious, by succession of nature, not only to crime, but also to misery."§ Again,—"Our David confesses himself to have sinned, not in himself alone, but in the first man, when the divine command was transgressed. . . . Truly, we all have sinned in the first man, and, through the succession of nature, the succession of crime also is transfused from the one into all. Against whom, then, have I sinned? Against the Father, or the Son? Truly, against him to whom I was under obligation for that which I sinned in not fulfilling. The command is given to man that he should eat of all that was in the garden, but should not touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam

\* De Anima, 41.

† S. Hil. Opera. Commentarius in Matt. Can. xviii. ed. Parisii 1631, fol. 554.

‡ Ibid. Can. x. fol. 513.

§ Apologia David, posterior, cap. viii. Op. Amb. Lut. Par., 1661, tom. I. fol. 512.

is in each of us. In him the human condition fell, because sin has passed through the one into all. I see the sum of my debt. I see what an amount of crime I have contracted, whilst I taste the forbidden and interdicted fruit. I owe compensation for the crime which I have done, since the obligation due to heavenly authority could not preserve an untarnished faith."\* Again, in his commentary on Romans v. 12, Ambrose says, "It is manifest that in Adam, as in mass, all sinned. For he, being corrupt through sin, begat all his offspring under sin. By him, therefore, we all are sinners, because we all are of him."†

‡ 4. *Doctrine of Pelagius and his associates.*

The Platonic theory of Origen, as to the pre-existence of the souls of men, and their several apostasy and fall in that pre-existent state, constituted a signal departure from the accepted doctrine of the church on the subject of original sin, and prepared the way for subsequent errors. But it was not until a century and a half after his death that the opinions adopted by Pelagius and his associates, Celestius and Julian, and disseminated by them with great zeal, gave occasion to that controversy which resulted in the more full exposition and defence of the scriptural doctrine on the subject. The Pelagian system is stated, with sufficient accuracy for our purpose, by Dr. Wiggers, himself an apologist for those whose doctrine he exhibits, in the following propositions:—

"1. A propagation of sin by generation is by no means to be admitted. This physical propagation of sin can be admitted only when we grant the propagation of the soul by generation. But this is a heretical error. Consequently, there is no original sin; and nothing in the moral nature of man has been corrupted by Adam's sin.

"Besides the passages already quoted, the following may suffice as proof that this was a Pelagian tenet. In his commentary on Romans vii. 8, Pelagius remarks:—"They are insane who teach that the sin of Adam comes to us (per traducem) by propagation." In another passage, (which, indeed, is not now to be found in that very interpolated work,—but which Augustine quotes from it, verbatim,—De Pec. Mer. iii. 3.) Pelagius says, 'The soul does not come by propagation, but only the flesh; and so, this only has the propagated sin, and this only deserves punishment. But it is unjust that the soul born to-day, that has not come from the substance of Adam, should bear so old and extrinsic a sin.' And the Pelagians discarded the propagation of souls by generation,—which seemed to lead to materialism,—and assumed that every soul is created immediately by God. In Pelagius' confession of faith, it is said, 'We believe that souls are given by God; and say that they are made by himself.' . . .

\* Apologia David, posterior, cap. xii. fol. 519.

† Opera. tom. iii. fol. 269.





"2. Adam's transgression was imputed to himself, but not to his posterity. A reckoning of Adam's sin as that of his posterity would conflict with the divine rectitude. Hence, bodily death is no punishment of Adam's imputed sin, but a necessity of nature.

"From the commentary of Pelagius on Romans, Augustine quotes his words thus, (De Pec. Mer. iii. 3.) 'It can in no way be conceded that God, who pardons a man's own sins, may impute to him the sins of another.' In his book 'On Nature,' Pelagius says, 'How can the sin be imputed, by God, to the man, which he has not known as his own?'—De Nat. et Gr. 30. If God is just, he can attribute no foreign blame to infants. 'Children, so long as they are children, that is, before they do any thing by their own will, cannot be punishable (rei).'<sup>†</sup>—Op. Imp. ii. 42. 'According to the apostle, by one man sin came into the world, and death by sin: because the world has regarded him as a criminal, and as one condemned to perpetual death. But death has come upon all men because the same sentence reaches all transgressors of the succeeding period; yet neither holy men nor the innocent have had to endure this death, but only such as have imitated him by transgression.'<sup>†</sup>—ii. 66. . . .

"3. Now, as sin itself has no more passed over to Adam's posterity than has the punishment of sin, so every man, in respect to his moral nature, is born in just the same state in which Adam was created.

"Augustine quotes (De Nat. et Gr. 21) from Pelagius' book, a passage in which it is said, 'What do you seek? They [infants] are well for whom you seek a physician. Not only are Adam's descendants no weaker than he, but they have even fulfilled more commands, since he neglected to fulfil so much as one.' In the letter to Demetrius, Pelagius depicts the prerogatives of human nature, without making any distinction between Adam's state before the fall and after it. Take only the description of conscience in the fourth chapter. 'A good conscience itself decides respecting the goodness of human nature. Is it not a testimony, which nature herself gives of her goodness, when she shows her displeasure at evil? There is in our heart, so to express myself, a certain natural holiness, which keeps watch, as it were, in the castle of the soul, and judges of good and evil.' . . .

"But with this Pelagian view of the uncorrupted state of man's nature, the admission of a moral corruption of men, in their present condition, by the continued habit of sinning, stood in no contradiction. This Pelagius taught expressly. According to the eighth chapter of his letter to Demetrius, he explicitly admits, that, by the protracted *habit* of sinning, sin appears in a measure to have gained a dominion over human nature, and, consequently, renders the practice of virtue difficult. 'While nature was yet new, and a long-continued habit of sinning had not spread, as it were, a mist over human reason, nature was left without a [written] law; to which the Lord, when it was oppressed by too many vices, and

stained with the mist of ignorance, applied the file of the law, in order that, by its frequent admonitions, nature might be cleansed again and return to its lustre. And there is no other difficulty of doing well but the long-continued habit of vice, which has contaminated us from youth up, and corrupted us for many years, and holds us afterwards so bound and subjugated to herself that she seems, in a measure, to have the force of nature.' Here Pelagius also mentions the bad education by which we are led to evil. But this habit of sinning, however, affects only adults, and that by their own fault. According to the Pelagian theory, man is born in the same state, in respect to his moral nature, in which Adam was created by God."<sup>\*</sup>

### § 5. Doctrine of Augustine.

The great antagonist of Pelagius was Augustine. In respect to the fundamental doctrine of the Pelagian system,—on the origin of the soul, he seems never to have assumed a decided position. He, however, constantly leaned to the doctrine of its generative origin. Writing to Jerome, who very strongly assailed that view, the bishop of Hippo declares that, "neque orando, neque legendo, neque meditando, neque ratiocinando," neither by prayer, by reading, by meditation, nor by reasoning, was he able, upon the assumption of the immediate creation of souls, to obviate the difficulty concerning the propagation of sin.<sup>†</sup> In his first book, De Anima et ejus Origine, after a review of the arguments upon which reliance was placed to establish the immediate-creation theory, he exclaims, "Let no one, therefore, imagine that, if the doctrine of the propagation of souls be false, it is to be refuted by such arguments; or, if the position that they are breathed into the bodies immediately by God, be true, that it is to be maintained by such reasoning."<sup>†</sup>

In reference to his correspondence with Jerome on this subject, Augustine says, "I wrote two books to Jerome, a presbyter of Bethlehem,—one of them concerning the origin of the soul of man. . . . In this I do not solve the question which I propose. He responded, commending (consultationem meam) my spirit of investigation, but declaring himself unable immediately to reply to my inquiries. So long as he was in the body I refrained from publishing this book, lest he might yet answer, and it would be better that it be published with his reply. But after his death I published it, so that he who reads it may be admonished either to abstain altogether from inquiry as to the mode in which souls are given to the offspring, or, on a subject certainly very obscure, to admit that solution of the question which is consistent with the most evident facts

\* An Historical Presentation of Augustinism and Pelagianism. By G. F. Wiggers, D.D. Translated by Rev. R. Emerson: Andover, 1840, p. 84.

† Aug. Epist. xxviii. ad Hieron.

† Aug. De Anima et ejus Orig. lib. l. c. 19.



which the catholic faith recognises, respecting original sin in infants; who, unless renewed in Christ, will assuredly perish."<sup>\*</sup>

Perhaps the reason of his ambiguity on this subject had reference to the impeachments of the Pelagians, who continually asserted that he was still infected with the Manichean heresy of his youth and cited this doctrine as evidence. On this point he says, of his six books in reply to Julian, that "in the first two, by means of the testimonies of the saints, who, after the apostles, have defended the catholic faith, the impudence of Julian is repelled, who thought to object it against us as a Manichean dogma, because we assert original sin to be derived from Adam, which, by the washing of regeneration, is taken away, not only in adults, but in infants also. To what an extent some of Julian's own sentiments harmonize with the Manicheans, I showed in the last part of my first book."<sup>†</sup>

In respect to the apostasy and original sin, the following were the leading points of the doctrine which Augustine vindicated against the Pelagians:—

1. The whole human nature was created holy in the person of Adam.
2. It was so constituted, in its creation, that any act of sin would bind the nature which caused it in the bondage of depravity, as a natural necessity resulting from the sin. This necessary bondage he designates as the first element in the punishment of sin.
3. Adam was endowed with the generative faculty, by means of which his seed, who were one in him, should receive personal existence, and a several part in the common nature.
4. The transgression of Adam induced the subjection of the whole nature to the bondage of the depravity thus embraced; which, as it is not caused by any immediate divine interposition, but is the native and proper effect of the sin, is, therefore, not only a punishment of the sin, but an element of the criminality which thenceforth attaches to man's nature.
5. As each of the posterity of Adam receives existence, he with his birth acquires a part in the criminality of the first sin, and in the depravity so induced.

6. The sin and depravity thus arising involve Adam and all his posterity in the penalty of all earthly calamities, and eternal death; from which nothing but the redemption of Christ can save.

7. The bondage of sin is such that, as there is no escaping its curse but by the blood of Christ, so there is no freedom from its power but by the transforming Spirit of God.

A few extracts will be sufficient to illustrate the views presented by Augustine on these points. In reply to the Pelagians, who urged that (*aliena peccata*) foreign sins could not be justly imputed to any, he says,

\* Aug. Retractions, lib. ii.

† Ibid.

"Nor are those sins called foreign as though they belonged not at all to infants; since in Adam all then sinned, inasmuch as his nature was endowed with a power of producing those who as yet were (*omnes ille unus*) all one, to wit, he. But the sins are called foreign, because the posterity were not yet living their own lives; but whatever was to be in the future offspring, the life of the one man contained. 'But by no means is it to be admitted,' say they, (the Pelagians,) 'that God, who pardons men's own sins, should impute foreign sins.' He pardons; but by the Spirit of regeneration, not by the flesh of generation. They were, indeed, foreign, when they, who when propagated were to bear them, did not yet exist; but now, by carnal generation, they belong to those to whom they have not yet been forgiven through the spiritual regeneration."<sup>\*</sup> Equally clear is the statement which we quote on page 496 of the present work. Again, he says;

"In respect to the origin of the seed, from which all were to spring, all were in that individual; and all these are he, none of whom as yet existed individually. According to this seminal origin, Levi is said to have been in the loins of his father Abraham.—When, in respect to his substance, he did not yet exist, still, as respects the relation of seed, it is not falsely nor idly said, that he was there."<sup>†</sup> "The whole human race (*universum genus humanum*) which by the woman was to become his offspring, was in the first man, when the pair received the divine sentence of condemnation. And what man was, not by creation, but by sin and punishment, that he begat, so far, at least, as pertains to the origin of sin and death."<sup>‡</sup> "I have said that sin injures no nature but its own; I therefore said it, because he who injures a good man does him in fact no injury, since it really increases his heavenly reward. . . . The Pelagians are ready to pervert this sentiment to the support of their dogma, and to say, that infants therefore cannot be injured by (*aliena peccata*) the sins of another, because I have asserted sins to injure no nature but their own: not observing that infants, as they pertain to the human nature, therefore contract original sin; because in the first man the human nature sinned, and, hence, it is true that human nature is injured by no sins but its own."<sup>§</sup>

Great exception was taken by the Pelagians to that feature of the system of Augustine which represents the bondage of the nature of man to sin as being a punishment of the apostasy; and the outcry is still echoed by the disciples of the Pelagian school. As is usual in such cases, these writers begin by misrepresenting the doctrine which they decry. Dr. Wiggers states it thus:—"The propagation of Adam's sin among his posterity, is a punishment of the same sin. The sin was the punishment

\* Aug. de Peo. Mer. lib. iii. 7, 8.

† De Civ. Dei, lib. xiii. 3.

‡ Opus Imperfectum, lib. iv. 104.

§ Retract. lib. i. cap. 10.





of the sin. The corruption of human nature in the whole race, was the righteous punishment of the transgression of the first man, in whom all men already existed."\* "The most signal moral punishment of Adam's transgression, was, therefore, the sin itself, or the moral corruption, that passed over to his posterity, by which Adam was also punished in his descendants. . . . But the moral punishment of Adam's sin was also a *positive* punishment of it. An entire moral ruin of man, did not follow from the nature of Adam's transgression, but God had annexed this to it as a punishment; and it was made a condition by the prohibition. God punished sin with sin. The sinfulness of the whole human race is penal."† The zeal which this writer displays in charging this as the doctrine of Augustine, does not compensate for the lack of evidence in its support. What Augustine did teach on this point we shall presently see. That he did not hold the opinion thus attributed to him,—that the race are depraved, not by the natural effect of the sin, but by the positive interposition of God,—is sufficiently demonstrated by the very quotations with which Wiggers professes to prove his assertions.—"If Christ is the one in whom all are justified, because not the mere imitation of him makes them just, but grace regenerating by the Spirit; so is Adam therefore the one in whom all have sinned, because not the mere imitation of him makes them sinners, but the punishment generating by the flesh."‡ "We must distinguish three things:—sin, the punishment of sin, and that which in such manner is sin, that it is at the same time also the punishment of sin. Of the third kind is original sin, which is so sin that it is also the punishment of sin; which is indeed in children just born, but begins to appear in them as they grow up and have the needful wisdom. Yet the source of this sin descends from the will of him that sinned. For it was Adam; and in him we all were. Adam perished; and in him we all perished."§ "By the first pair, so great a sin was committed, that by it human nature was changed for the worse, an obligation (obligations, a bondage) of sin and a necessity of death being transmitted to posterity."|| Such are some of the passages of Augustine which Wiggers cites, to prove that he held the depravation of man's nature to have been, not a natural consequence of the apostasy, but a positive infliction from God! Nor have we been able to find any thing more plausible, to justify the charge here considered.

Neander, with more candour, states Augustine's doctrines. "Man is already determined within himself by his disposition before he proceeds to act. Evil and good cannot spring from the same root. The good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor the evil tree good fruit. The root from which all good proceeds, is love to God; the root of all evil, is love to self.

\* Wiggers' Augustinism and Pelagianism, p. 88.

† Ibid. pp. 92, 93.

‡ Aug. De Pec. Mer. lib. i. 15.

§ Opus Imperfectum, lib. i. 47.

|| De Civ. Dei, lib. xiv. 1.

According as man is predominantly actuated by love to God, or love to himself, he brings to pass that which is good, or that which is evil. That [Pelagian] definition of free will, he maintains, cannot apply to God nor to holy beings. It in fact presupposes a corruption of the moral powers, and loses its applicability the more in proportion as man advances farther in moral development,—in proportion as he advances to true freedom. At the highest point of moral advancement, freedom and necessity meet together; the rational being acts with freedom, in determining himself according to the inward law of his nature. . . . Proceeding on the above-stated conception of freedom, Augustine must believe that he found in the actual appearance of human nature, an opposition to the freedom which was so apprehended; inasmuch as this true conception of freedom is in this case nowhere applicable. Man uniformly finds himself in a state contradicting this freedom,—in a condition of bondage to sin. Thus this determinate conception of freedom leads Augustine to the presupposition of a corruption of human nature, and of an original moral condition which preceded it. And cohering also with this is the thought that, when once this original freedom had been disturbed by the first freely chosen aberration from the law of the original nature, a state of bondage followed after the state of freedom. As human nature, evolving itself in conformity with its condition by nature, surrendering itself to the godlike, becomes continually more confirmed and established in true freedom; so, in surrendering itself to sin, it becomes continually more involved in the bondage of sin; to which Augustine frequently applies the words of Christ: 'He who commits sin is the servant of sin.' Evil is its own punishment, as goodness is its own reward."\* Such was the sense in which Augustine represented sin as the punishment of sin. As we have already seen, he denies that it can injure any nature but that of the sinner; and that the posterity of Adam are only injured by sin, as it was the sin of their nature as well as his. He held the depravity to be penally from God in the sense that the Creator, in making man, so constructed his nature, that the embrace of sin would constitute an enslaving of the nature to its power,—a slavery growing out of the very nature of sin in its relation to the soul; and in no sense caused by the interposition of God; but from which nothing but the power of God is adequate to relieve the soul.

In reference to the broad line of distinction which runs between the powers of nature,—the operation of second causes,—and the immediate agency of God, as bearing upon this whole subject, the ground taken by Augustine is clearly defined. "The whole of this ordinary course of nature has certain natural laws of its own, according to which, even the spirit of life, which is a created substance, has its specific appetites,

\* Neander's Church History, Torrey's translation, vol. ii. p. 602.



but bounded in a certain way, which even the corrupted will cannot pass. And the elements of this material world have a definite power and quality,—what each one can or cannot do, and what can or cannot be done respecting each. From these, as the primordial sources, all things which are generated take, each in its time, their origin and growth, and the limits and modifications of their respective kinds. Hence it happens that pulse is not produced from wheat, nor wheat from pulse—man from beast, nor beast from man. But, besides this natural movement and course of things, the power of the Creator hath in itself a capacity to do, concerning all these, otherwise than their own (*quasi seminales rationes*) natural powers can do. Yet neither can that which he has implanted in them, relative to these powers, be exercised independently of him, nor yet does he assert his omnipotence by the exercise of an intrusive, arbitrary force, but by the power of wisdom; and, concerning each particular thing, in his own time he does that which he had before created in it a capacity to have done. It is, therefore, a different mode of things by which this plant germinates so, and that in a different way;—this time of life is prolific, and that is not;—a man can speak, and an animal cannot. The (*rationes*) efficient causes of these and the like modes of operation are not merely in God, but are also by him implanted and concreated in the things he has made. But that wood, cut from off the earth, dry, polished, without any root, without earth or water, should suddenly flourish and bear fruit,—that a woman, barren in youth, should bear a child in old age,—that an ass should speak,—and whatever there is of this kind, he gave it, indeed, to the natures he created, that these things might take place with them. So that he does not with them what, in creating them, he had made impossible to be done with them; since he is not more powerful than himself. But he constituted things in a distinctive manner, so that they should not have these phenomena in the natural course of things, but in that way, for which they were thus so created, that their nature should be fully subject to a more powerful will. God, therefore, has in himself the hidden causes of certain acts, which causes he has not implanted in the things he has made; and these causes he puts in operation, not in that work of providence by which he creates natures as they are, but in that by which he manages, after his pleasure, the things which, according to his pleasure, he made. And here is the grace by which sinners are saved. For, as it respects nature, depraved by its own corrupted will, it has in itself no return, except by God's grace, whereby it is aided and restored. Nor need men despair by reason of that saying,—Prov. ii. 19,—‘None who walk in it shall return;’ for it was spoken of the burden of their iniquity, in order that whoever returns should attribute his return, not to himself, but to the grace of God—‘not of works, lest any should boast.’ Therefore the apostle speaks of the mystery of this grace as hidden,—not in this world, in which are hidden

the causal reasons of all things which arise naturally, as Levi was hid in the loins of Abraham, but in God, who created all things.”

In respect to God's sovereign relation to sin, he declares that “Some things God both produces and ordains; others he only produces. The holy he both produces and ordains; but sinners, so far forth as they are sinners, he does not produce, but only ordains.”† And, with a still more specific reference to the present point, he says, in respect to the language of Paul in Romans ix. 18–20, “We seek for the meritorious cause of the hardening, and we find it; for (*peccati universa massa damnata est*) the whole lump of sin is condemned, deservedly. Nor does God harden by imparting depravity, but by not imparting mercy; for they to whom it is not imparted are neither worthy nor deserving of it, but rather, that it should not be imparted, of this they are worthy, this they have deserved. But we seek for the merit of mercy, and do not find it, for there is none; else grace is made void, if rendered to merit, and not freely bestowed.”‡

That the doctrine of Augustine, in opposition to the Pelagian heresy, was that of the catholic church, and not a new invention of the bishop of Hippo, as is asserted by Wiggers and the apologists of Pelagius, is manifest from facts which that writer himself records;—the secrecy of the first proceedings of the Pelagians; the prevarications and falsehoods with which, when brought to trial, they veiled their opinions; and the unanimous condemnation which those opinions received, even from those synods who, misled by the duplicity of Pelagius and his associates, acquitted them of the charge of holding the obnoxious sentiments. It is further evident from the universal acceptance which was accorded to the teachings of Augustine on the subject, and to the decrees of those synods and councils by which Pelagianism was condemned.

#### § 6. *The Mediæval Theology.*

It is not our design to trace, in detail, the history of opinion on the present subject during the middle ages. Nominally, the theology of Augustine was universally received by the church of Rome. But, in reality, the growing corruption of that church produced some essential changes in this as well as the other doctrines of religion. About the beginning of the twelfth century, the Nominal philosophy, introduced by Rosceline and extensively adopted, combined with other causes to give a powerful impulse to Pelagian tendencies. According to the philosophy which prevailed prior to the rise of this sect, such universal conceptions as those of species, genera, and nature have, as their ground, some kind of objective realities. They are not the mere result of thought, but have, in some proper sense, a real existence, and lie, as essences, at the base of the existence of all individuals and particulars. From the Stoical

• De Genesi ad Literam, lib. ix. 17, 18.

† De Genesi ad Lit. lib. i. v.

‡ Epist. 105, iii. Op. Aug., Parisii ed. 1836, Ep. 194, § 14.





philosophy, Rosceline introduced the opposite doctrine,—that only individuals have any real existence. General conceptions are the mere result of logical combinations of thought. They are but abstractions, which have no objective significance. They are mere names, and not things. Hence the designation of Nominalists, by which this sect of philosophers is distinguished. In Rosceline himself the skeptical tendency of the Nominal theory developed itself in questions and controversies respecting the personality of the Three who subsist in the divine Essence, and the nature of that Essence,—which do not fall within our present inquiry. His most eminent disciple, Abelard, who was also the great expositor of the new philosophy, illustrates, in his writings, its bearing upon the subject of original sin. Rejecting the Augustinian doctrine of a universal human nature which was in the first man, he was constrained to reject with it the whole doctrine of original sin peculiar to that system. Hence, he expounds Romans v. 12 as meaning no more than that the sin of Adam involves his children in the punishment, but not in the guilt; and by the word, sin, understands that, not the crime, but the penalty, is, by metonymy, designated. "He could not cast off the theory that all continued subject to those punishments that had passed upon them from Adam; and, indeed, in order to free himself from it, it would have been necessary for him to assume an entirely different position towards the church doctrine of his time, and to make a far more thorough and resolute application of the thoughts which he had expressed. But, resolved as he was to hold fast on the above determinations of the church doctrine, while he refused at the same time to acknowledge the catholic doctrine concerning original guilt and sin, it could not be otherwise than that, from his own point of view, which would not allow him to acknowledge the mysterious connection between the development of the entire race and original sin, God must appear only so much the more as a being who acted arbitrarily and unjustly. Thus he was driven from rationalism to the most abrupt supernaturalism, falling back, as the last resort, upon the unlimited will of the Creator, who may dispose of his creatures according to his own pleasure. He thinks that those who are punished without any guilt of their own can no more complain, than the brutes which God has appointed for the service of man, can enter into judgment with him. He goes to the extreme of making the distinction of right and wrong to depend on the divine will;\* a representation which, it is evident, directly contradicts his doctrine of God's omnipotence."†

\* "Hac ratione profiteor, quoquomodo Deus creaturam suam tractare velit, nullius injuriæ potest argui. Nec malum aliquo modo potest dici, quod juxta ejus voluntatem fiat. Non enim aliter bonum a malo discernere possumus, nisi quod ejus est consentaneum voluntati et in placito ejus consistit."—Lib. ii. p. 595.

† Neander, vol. iv. p. 494.

In the midst of surrounding developments of error, Odo, or Udarus, of Tournay, a contemporary of Abelard, exhibits an illustrious example of the lingering power of Augustine; as he was, also, of the fervent piety which occasionally shone amid the shadows of the "dark ages." At first a teacher of the realistic philosophy, in the cathedral school at Tournay, he was attended by crowds of enthusiastic pupils from France, Germany and the Netherlands. In his school, engaging in the exposition of Augustine's work *De Libero Arbitrio*, he came to a passage, which sets forth the wretched condition of those whose souls are devoted to earthly pursuits, to the forfeiture of heavenly glory. Applying the argument to himself and his ambitious scholars, so greatly was he moved by his own expostulations, that, bursting into tears, he rose from the chair, and, followed by a number of his pupils, went forth to the church, where he devoted himself to the pursuit of those higher honours which come from God. He became as eminent for piety and zeal in defence of the gospel, as formerly in the walks of philosophy; and was, successively, abbot of St. Martin of Tours, and, in 1105, chosen bishop of Cambray. Among his writings are three books on original sin, from which a paragraph will serve to exhibit the thoroughly Augustinian tone of his theology:—

"What is the difference between native and personal sin? For sin is spoken of in two modes,—as natural and personal. That is natural with which we are born, which we derive from Adam, in whom we all sinned. For in him was my soul,—generically, and not personally; not individually, but in the common nature. For the common nature of all human souls was, in Adam, involved in sin. And therefore every human soul is criminal, as to its nature; although not so personally. Thus the sin which we sinned in Adam, to me indeed is a sin of nature, but in him a personal sin. In Adam it is more criminal, in me less so; for in him, it was not I who now am, but that which I am, that sinned. There sinned in him, not I, but this which is I. I sinned as (generically) man, and not as Odo. My substance sinned, but not my person; and since the substance does not exist otherwise than in a person, the sin of my substance attaches to my person, although not a personal sin. For a personal sin is such as,—not that which I am,—but I who now am, commit,—in which Odo, and not humanity, sins,—in which I a person, and not a nature, sin. But inasmuch as there is no person without a nature, the sin of a person is also the sin of a nature, although it is not a sin of nature."\*

\* It is impossible to render into English the terseness and perspicuity of the original. "Quid distat naturale peccatum et personale? Dicitur enim duobus modis peccatum personale et naturale. Et naturale est cum quo nascimur, et quod ab Adam trahimus, in quo omnes peccavimus. In ipso enim erat anima mea, specie non persona, non individua sed communis natura. Nam omnis humanæ animæ natura communis erat in Adam obnoxia peccato. Et ideo omnis humana anima culpabilis est secundum suam





Other causes combined with the Nominal philosophy to corrupt the doctrines concerning man's nature and original sin. We have seen that Augustine warns his readers, that in respect to the origin of the soul they should either be content to leave the question undiscussed, or adopt the theory of natural propagation, as alone consistent with the scriptural doctrine of our relation to Adam. The schoolmen, however, accepted neither branch of the alternative of Augustine, but, on the contrary, adopted the theory of immediate creation; and the subtleties of the scholastic dialectics were employed in the construction of a system in harmony with this theory, and yet maintaining the semblance of consistency with the Augustinian teachings on the subject of original sin. The doctrine respecting the nature of man was also essentially modified. The distinction of *bona naturalia* and *bona gratuita* was introduced. According to one form of this theory, the first man was endowed with all the natural powers of the soul in full vigour and purity, and a will free and uncorrupt. By the right use of these powers, he was capable of continuing in the untarnished integrity of his original estate. But in order to positive righteousness,—to which these natural powers were altogether inadequate,—in order to the accomplishing of any thing which should be positively good, and constitute the perfect likeness of God, he must be invested with supernatural and special gifts of divine grace. This special grace was not bestowed at first; but reserved until, by the right use of his natural powers, man should have qualified himself for the reception of it, and merited in a certain sense its bestowal.

By Thomas Aquinas and the Dominicans, this opinion was so far modified, that they held the distinction between the state of pure nature and that resulting from the superaddition of special grace, to be, indeed, just, inasmuch as original righteousness was not of the nature of man, but consequent upon the special and supernatural aid of divine grace, without which its attainment was impossible. But they taught that this special grace was at the beginning bestowed upon man; so that he was endowed with original righteousness from the first. The difference, however, between the two theories is more apparent than real, even upon this point; since Thomas held it as the most probable opinion that man was created in a state of pure nature, but endowed with powers which were necessarily active; and, having been created with a heavenward direction, he

naturam, etsi non secundum suam personam. Ita peccatum quo peccavimus in Adam, mihi quidam naturale est, in Adam vero personale. In Adam gravius; levius in me; nam peccavi in eo, non qui sum sed quod sum. Peccavi in eo, non ego, sed hoc, quod sum ego. Peccavi homo, non Odo. Peccavi substantiam, non personam; et quia substantia non est nisi in persona, peccatum substantiam est etiam personam, sed non personale. Peccatum vero personale est quo facio ego qui sum, non hoc quod sum; quo pecco Odo, non homo; quo pecco persona, non natura; sed quia persona non est sine natura, peccatum personae est etiam naturae, sed non naturae."—Biblioth. Vet. Pat. vol. xxi. p. 233, in Beecher's Conflict of Ages, p. 319.

instantly turned to God, and attained to the possession of supernatural grace and original righteousness.

According, however, to either branch of this theory, the whole doctrine of original sin is essentially modified. By the first transgression, man was not divested of natural goodness, nor a real and positive depravity superinduced. Only the supernatural grace, and, by consequence, original righteousness, was taken away, and the natural powers, the *bona naturalia*, were disordered. "Habit," says Aquinas, "is twofold. There is one in which a power is inclined to action, as knowledges and virtues are habits; and in this sense original sin is not a habit. In another sense, habit, designates (*dispositio alicujus naturae*) an arrangement of any nature which is composed of several things, according to which (*bene se habet, vel male*) it is characterized by excellence, or the reverse; and especially when such an arrangement so bears, as it were, upon the nature that it constitutes disorder or soundness. And in this sense original sin is a habit; for it is a certain disorderly arrangement, resulting from the dissolution of that harmony, in which consisted the principle of original righteousness;—as, also, bodily sickness is a disorderly arrangement of the body, by which is destroyed the equilibrium in which consists the principle of health; whence also original sin is called a languor of the nature. To the question, therefore, whether original sin is a habit merely, it is to be answered, that as bodily sickness has something privative, as the equilibrium of health is taken away, and something positive, to wit, the humours occupying disorderly relations,—so original sin has the privation of original righteousness, and with this a disorderly arrangement of the parts of the soul. Hence, it is not a thing more privative; but is also a sort of corrupt habit."\*

Well might Luther say, of this doctrine, that, "as it takes from the magnitude of original sin, it is to be shunned as a deadly poison." Out of the former branch of the theory—cherished by the Franciscans, the advocates of the Nominal philosophy—was at length developed the Molina-Pelagianism of the Jesuits,—the theology which is now dominant in the church of Rome. The theory of Aquinas is reproduced in those Protestant writers who, by means of the distinctions of pure, impure and not-pure, as applied to the soul of man, attempt to reconcile the assertion of its immediate creation with the fact of its actual depravity.

#### § 7. The earlier Reformed Confessions.

The first Basle confession, 1532.

"We confess man, at the first, to have been made wholly after the image of God, in righteousness and holiness. But (*sua sponte*) by his own will he fell into sin; by which fall the whole human race is become corrupt, and subject to damnation.

\* S. Thom. Aquin. Sum. Theol., Pars prima secundae, Qu. lxxiii. 1.



"Our nature is also vitiated, and has acquired such a tendency to sin, that, unless renewed by the Holy Spirit, man can of himself neither do nor will any thing good."

The second Basle or first Helvetic confession, 1536.

"Man, when he had been created by a holy God the perfect image of God upon earth, having precedence over all the visible creatures, and consisting of soul and body, of which the latter was mortal, the former immortal, (*sua culpa in vitium prolapsus*;) by his own crime falling into depravity, drew with him in the same ruin the whole human race, and rendered it obnoxious to the same calamity.

"This plague, which they call, original, has so pervaded the whole human race that the child of wrath and enemy of God can be recovered by no power but that of God, through Christ. For, if any good fruit survives, it is continually enfeebled by our vices, and turned to corruption; for the power of evil prevails, and neither permits men to yield to the guidance of reason nor to cultivate (*mentis divinitatem*) the likeness of God in the soul."

The Gallic confession, attributed to Calvin, 1560.

"We believe man, who was created pure and upright and in the likeness of God's image, by his own crime, to have apostatized from the grace which he had received, and thus to have alienated himself from God, the fountain of all righteousness and every good thing; so that his nature is altogether corrupt, and he, blinded in understanding and depraved in heart, has lost every feature of that (original) excellence, without the least exception. For, although he has some power of choice between good and evil, yet we affirm whatever light is in him immediately to become darkness when he engages in seeking after God; so that, by his own understanding and reason, he can by no means come to him. Yes, although he is endowed with a will, by which he is moved in one direction or another, yet, as it is entirely under bondage to sin, he has absolutely no liberty for the pursuit of that which is good, unless, by grace, he receive it from the gift of God.

"We believe the whole of Adam's posterity to be infected with this contagion, which we call original sin;—that is, (*vitium*;) a vice flowing from propagation, and not arising from imitation merely, as the Pelagians suppose,—all the errors of whom we detest. Nor do we think it necessary to inquire how it is possible for this sin to be propagated from one to another. It is enough that those endowments which God bestowed upon Adam were given, not to him alone, but to all his posterity; and, hence, that we, in his person, were spoiled of all those gifts, and fell under all this misery and curse.

"We believe this vice to be (*vere peccatum*) truly sin, which renders each and every one of the human race, unborn infants not excepted, subject, at the bar of God, to eternal death. We further assert this vice

to be, even after baptism, truly sin, (*quod attinet ad culpam*;) which constitutes a crime, although they who are sons of God are not, therefore, condemned; and that, because, out of his gratuitous goodness and mercy, God does not impute it to them. We further declare this depravity always to bring forth some fruits of wickedness and rebellion; so that even they who excel in holiness, although they resist its power, yet are defiled with many shortcomings and sins, as long as they remain in this world."

The First Scotch confession, 1560.

"We confess and acknowledge this our God to have created man, to wit, our first father Adam, to his own image and similitude; to whom he gave wisdom, lordship, justice, free will, and clear knowledge of himself; so that, in the whole nature of man, there could be noted no imperfection; from which honour and perfection, man and woman did both fall. The woman being deceived by the serpent, and man obeying the voice of the woman; both conspiring against the sovereign majesty of God, who, in express words, had before threatened death, if they presumed to eat of the forbidden tree.

"By which transgression,—commonly called original sin,—was the image of God utterly defaced in man, and he and his posterity of nature became enemies to God, slaves to Satan, and servants to sin; inasmuch that death everlasting hath had, and shall have, power and dominion over all that have not been, are not, or shall not be regenerated from above: which regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, working, in the hearts of the elect of God, an assured faith in the promise of God revealed to us in his word; by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus, with the graces and benefits promised in him."\*

Articles of the church of England, 1562.

"Art. IX. *Of original or birth sin*.—Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, and, therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain,—yea, in them that are regenerated,—whereby the lust of the flesh, called, in Greek, *φρόνημα σαρκός*,—which some do expound, the wisdom, some the sensuality, some the affections, some the desire of the flesh,—is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin."

The Belgic confession, 1562.

"We believe God to have made man of the dust of the ground, after

\* Confessions of public authority in the church of Scotland, Glasgow, 1771, p. 28.





his image, that is, good, righteous and holy; who was able, (*proprio arbitrio*) of himself, to regulate his own will, and conform it to the will of God. But, when he was in honour, he knew it not, and did not recognise his own good; but, (*seipsum sciens et volens*), following his own mind and will, he enslaved himself to sin, and, by consequence, to death and the curse; whilst, giving heed to the words and deceptions of the devil, he transgressed the law of life which he received from the Lord, and immediately apostatized and alienated himself from God, his true life,—his nature being altogether vitiated and corrupted by sin. Thus it came to pass that he has rendered himself obnoxious to death, corporeal and spiritual. Therefore, having become evil and perverse, and corrupt in all his ways and plans, he lost all those excellent gifts with which God had adorned him; so that there is nothing of them left, unless it be the feeblest ray and most slender traces, which, however, are sufficient to render men inexcusable, because whatever of light is in us, is turned into thick darkness, as also the Scripture teaches, saying, 'The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.' For, there, John evidently calls men, darkness. Therefore, whatever opinions are held respecting the freedom of man's will, we deservedly reject, since he is the servant of sin, and man can, of himself, do nothing unless it is given him from heaven. Who then will dare to boast himself to be able to do whatever he chooses, when Christ himself has said, 'No one can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him?' Who will hold up his own will, when he hears that all the affections of the flesh are enmity against God? Who will glory in his own understanding, who knows the natural man to be incapable of knowing the things of the Spirit? In short, who will bring forward even any of his own thoughts, that understands that we are not fit, as of ourselves, to think any thing, but all our sufficiency is of God? What the apostle says, must therefore remain sure and immovable:—'It is God who worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.' For no mind, no will, acquiesces in the will of God, upon which Christ himself has not first operated; which he also declares, saying, 'Without me ye can do nothing.'

"We believe the sin which is called, original, to have been scattered and diffused, by the disobedience of Adam, through the entire human species. This original sin is a corruption of the whole nature, and a hereditary vice, by which even infants are defiled in the womb; and which, as some poisonous root, generates every sort of sin in man; and it is so vile and detestable before God, that it suffices for the condemnation of the whole race. Nor are we to suppose that it is altogether removed, or pulled up by the root, by baptism; since from it, as from a corrupt spring, unceasing waves and streams arise and continually flow abroad. Yet to the sons of God, it may not be charged nor imputed to condemnation; but, of the mere grace and mercy of God, it is remitted to them;

not that, relying upon this remission, they may slumber; but that, by the sense of this corruption, pardon may excite continual groans in believers, and that thereby they may the more ardently desire to be freed from this body of death. Hence, we condemn the error of the Pelagians, who assert this sin of origin to be nothing else than the effect of imitation."

The latter Helvetic confession, 1565.

"Man was made in the beginning in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, good and upright; but by the subtlety of the serpent, and his own crime, falling from goodness and rectitude, he became obnoxious to sin, death and various calamities. And such as he became by the fall, such are they who are begotten of him, obnoxious to sin, death and various calamities. Now, sin we understand to be that native corruption of man, from those our first parents, derived or propagated in us all; by which, immersed in depraved lusts, and averse from good, but propense to all evil, full of all unrighteousness, unbelief, contempt and hatred of God, we are not able, of ourselves, to do, or even to think, any thing good. Nay, rather, in thoughts, words and deeds, depraved and at variance with the law of God, we continually bring forth corrupt fruit, appropriate to the evil tree. By reason whereof, through our desert exposed to the wrath of God, we are subjected to just punishment; so that we had all been cast off from God, had not Christ the Redeemer brought us back.

"By death, therefore, we do not understand merely bodily death, which on account of sin is once to be endured by us all, but also the eternal punishment which is due to our sins and corruption. For the apostle says, Eph. ii., 'We were dead in trespasses and sins, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ.' So Rom. v. 12. As by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed to all men, (*in quo omnes peccaverunt*), in whom all sinned. . . . We, moreover, condemn Florinus and Blastus against whom also Irenæus wrote; and all who make God the author of sin. For it is expressly written, Psalm v., 'Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness. Thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing.' And again, John viii., 'When the devil speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it.' But in us ourselves there is enough of vice and corruption, so that it is not necessary that God should infuse into us any new or greater depravity. Therefore, when God is said in the Scriptures to harden, to blind, and to deliver over to a reprobate mind, it is to be understood that God does it in just retribution as a righteous judge and avenger. Furthermore, as often as God, in the Scriptures, is said and appears to do any evil, it is not therefore said, because man is not the doer of the evil,



but because, in his righteous judgment, God, who is able if he willed to prevent it, permits it to be done; and does not prevent it; either because by the wickedness of man he accomplishes good; as by the sins of Joseph's brethren; or because he may restrain the sins, so that they shall not break out and go beyond what is fitting. St. Augustine says in his *Enchiridion*, 'In a wonderful and ineffable manner, that is not done contrary to his will, which nevertheless is contrary to his will. For it could not take place, did not he permit it to be done. Nor yet does he permit it unwillingly, but willing to do so. Nor would a good God permit evil to occur, unless the omnipotent One were able out of evil to accomplish good.' Thus speaks Augustine. The other questions,—Whether God willed the fall of Adam, or impelled him to his fall? or, Why he did not prevent the fall? and such questions, we leave to the inquisitive, knowing that the Lord prohibited man to eat of the forbidden fruit, and punished the transgression; and yet what was done was not evil with respect to the providence, will and power of God; but only with respect to our will and that of Satan, repugnant to the will of God."

#### § 8. Continental Divines of the Reformed church.

Those above, are the most important of the earlier Reformed confessions; with which the others, and the Lutheran formularies and writers, are in perfect harmony. But our space will not permit their insertion.

The fact cannot have failed to strike the reader that in no one of these confessions of the Reformed church is the line of demarcation drawn between original sin imputed and original sin inherent. The same manner of presentation is characteristic of the writings of Calvin, the master spirit of the Reformed church, whose influence was paramount from an early period of his ministry, and entered decisively into the construction of all the principal Reformed confessions. So strongly are the writings of Calvin characterized by the inseparable combination of the two elements of original sin,—so invariably does he recognise the depravity of man, as the *terminus ad quem*,—the immediate effect of the first act of transgression, in the entire nature of man,—that occasion has thence been taken to deny that the Genevan reformer held the doctrine of the imputation to us of Adam's sin. But the candid reader, who will carefully examine the writings of the illustrious reformer, will find that he distinctly and habitually recognises and earnestly asserts it;—but that in speaking of it he is ever actuated by an anxiety to guard against the supposition, that we are condemned by an arbitrary putation of a merely extraneous act, personal to Adam; instead of justly suffering for the intrinsic guilt and depravity, which, with our being, flow to us from him,—the idea that the first transgression may justly be designated, after the manner of the Pelagians, (*alienum peccatum*) a foreign sin. Hence the way in which he associates the two elements in original

sin, in his Institutes, and elsewhere. Thus he speaks of "that hereditary corruption, which the fathers called original sin; meaning by sin the depravation of a nature previously good and pure; on which subject they had much contention, nothing being farther from carnal apprehension than that all should be made guilty by the crime of one, and so the sin be made common; which seems to have been the reason why the most ancient doctors of the church do but glance at this point, or at least explained it with less perspicuity than it required. Yet this timidity could not prevent Pelagius arising; who profanely pretended that the sin of Adam only ruined himself, and did not injure his descendants. By concealing the disease with this delusion, Satan sought to render it incurable. But when it was evinced by the plain testimony of the scripture, that sin was communicated from the first man to all his posterity, he sophistically urged that it was communicated by imitation, not by propagation. Therefore good men, and beyond all others Augustine, have laboured to demonstrate that we are not corrupted by any adventitious means; but that we derive an innate depravity from our very birth."\* Here, Calvin, in the first part of the passage, has in view the act of apostasy—"the depravation of a nature previously good,"—"the crime of one," which is a "sin common" to all. But as he proceeds he glides into the other aspect of the subject; and ends with native depravity. The same thing occurs in the next section, where he very clearly indicates the subject of which he speaks, as being the act of Adam's apostasy. This appears from the contrast which he draws between it and the righteousness by which we are justified. And yet much of what he says on the subject is only predicable of inherent depravity. In fact, the same remark applies to the entire argument contained in the chapter. A few additional citations will set the doctrine of Calvin in a clear light.

"In the first epistle to the Corinthians, with a view to confirm the pious in a confidence of the resurrection, he [Paul] shows that the life which had been lost in Adam was recovered in Christ. He who pronounces that we are all dead in Adam, does also, at the same time, declare that we are implicated in the crime of the sin, (*labe peccati*;) for no condemnation could reach those who were not attainted with any crime, (*nulla iniquitatis culpa attingeretur*.) But his meaning cannot be better understood than from the relation of the other member of the sentence, where he informs us that the hope of life is restored by Christ. But that is well known to be accomplished only when Christ, by a wonderful communication, transfuses into us the virtue of his righteousness; as it is elsewhere said, The Spirit is life, because of righteousness."<sup>†</sup>

"It is of importance to point out, here, two distinctions between Christ

\* Calvin's Institutes, Book II. ch. i. 5.

† *Ibid.* 6.





and Adam. . . . The first is, that, in Adam's sin we are not condemned by a bare imputation, as though the punishment of another's sin were exacted of us, but we therefore endure his punishment, because we are also guilty of the crime, inasmuch as our nature, vitiated in him, is held guilty of iniquity by God. But Christ's righteousness restores to salvation by another method; for it is not accepted of God, because it is intrinsically in us, but the bounty of the Father makes us possess Christ himself, who is bestowed upon us with all his blessings.\*

We are aware that these expressions of Calvin have been explained as meaning that we therefore endure the punishment of Adam's sin because we are guilty of native depravity. This was the subterfuge under which Placeus sought to evade the condemnation of his heresy. But the language does not, we think, admit of this interpretation. It seems to be unambiguous:—"We therefore endure Adam's punishment (*pœnam ejus*), because we are guilty of the crime, since our nature, vitiated in him, is held guilty of iniquity by God." It is the apostasy, the vitiating of nature, and not the consequent depravity, which is described; and the whole matter of which Calvin speaks is specifically limited to the action of Adam's sin. It is, in *peccato Adæ*, that he says we are condemned and punished, because, *culpæ sumus rei*.—"Prior est, quod, in peccato Adæ, non per solam imputationem damnamur, ac si alieni peccati exigeretur a nobis pœna; sed ideo pœnam ejus sustinemus, quia et culpæ sumus rei, quatenus scilicet natura nostra in ipso vitata, iniquitatis reatu abstringitur apud Deum."\*

On this subject the language of Ursinus is very clear:—"Truly, we all justly bear the punishment of Adam's crime,—1. Because the crime is so Adam's as to be ours also. For we all sinned in Adam's sinning, because we were all in the loins of Adam. 2. Because we all, with our nature, receive the crime of Adam, we approve of it, we imitate it. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' 3. Since the whole nature of Adam was guilty, and we are propagated from his mass, it is impossible that we should not also be guilty:—'We are all, by nature, children of wrath.' 4. Adam received his gifts from God under this law:—that he should impart them to us, if he kept them himself, or destroy them altogether, if he failed to retain them. Inasmuch, therefore, as he lost them, he lost them not for himself alone, but for all his posterity."†

"The first sin," says Marck, "considered in its extent, was as noxious and evil, as in its nature; for it subjected the whole race of man to guilt‡

\* Calvin on Romans v. 17.

† Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism, Question vii. Edition of 1634, p. 46.

‡ In what sense Marck uses the word, *reatus*, (guilt,) in this place, may be seen not only from his definition elsewhere given, but by the language of his next section, where, alluding to the doctrine of propagated guilt, here stated, he says, "Neither is Christ, therefore, subject to the same guilt, (*reatus*)."§

and eternal condemnation from God, and that by the dispensation of justice, although the Socinians and Arminians refer it altogether to the sovereignty of God. For, as Adam received the image of God, not for himself alone, but for his seed, so he sinned, not for himself alone, but for us all; because we all were in him, as the branches in the root, the lump in the first fruits, the members in the head; and, therefore, we may invert the axiom of Paul. 'For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.'—Rom. xi. 16. Wherefore it is said that 'in Adam all die.'—1 Cor. xv. 22. And especially what the apostle has in Rom. v. 12,—'By one man sin entered the world,' &c.,—leads directly to the same conclusion. If *ip' e* be taken in a causative sense—'for that,'—it is not possible that sin and death should pervade the world through the sin of one man, if his crime was not, in the same sense, common to all; or, it may be rather rendered subjectively for, 'in which, (man),' as it is not uncommon to use *enī* for *ei*, as appears in Mark xi. 4 and Heb. ix. 17;—which interpretation, the other being rejected, is constantly adopted by Augustine against the Pelagians, who sought cover in the other rendering; and, since this transgression was not merely personal, as were those which followed it, but common, and, in a sense, belonging to the nature, it hence appears that the dogma of the Pelagians and Remonstrants is to be rejected,—that 'the sin of Adam was so alien to us that it could not be called ours;' for by God it could not be imputed to us justly, unless it was in some manner ours, since 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die.'—Ezek. xviii. 4."\*

#### § 9. The Synod of Dort, 1618.

In the beginning of the Arminian controversy, the Remonstrants so veiled their sentiments, on the subject of original sin, under ambiguous forms of expression, as to seem in harmony with the Reformed confessions. In the declaration or confession which they laid before the Synod of Dort, they say:—

"Inasmuch as Adam was (*stirps et radix*) the germ and root of the whole human race, he therefore involved and implicated not himself only, but also, together with himself, all his posterity, who (*quasi in lumbis ipsius conclusi erant*) existed as it were in his loins, and were to proceed from him by natural generation, in the same death and miseries; so that all men, without any distinction, our Lord Jesus Christ only excepted, by this one sin of Adam, are deprived of that primitive felicity, and destitute of true righteousness, which is necessary to the obtaining of eternal salvation, and are therefore born subject to that death which we have mentioned, and also to many present miseries. And this is commonly called, original sin."†

\* Marckii Modulla, Locus vi. 34.

† Confes. Remonst. cap. vii. § 4, in Op. Episcopii, Roterodami, 1655, vol. II.





On this subject, the Synod says,

"1. Man, from the beginning, was created in the image of God, adorned in his mind with the true and saving knowledge of his Creator and of spiritual things, with righteousness in his will and heart, and purity in all his affections, and thus was altogether holy; but, by the instigation of the devil and his own free will, revolting from God, he bereaved himself of these inestimable gifts, and on the contrary, in their place, contracted in himself blindness, horrible darkness, and perversity of judgment, in the mind; malice, rebellion, hardness, in the will and heart; and, finally, impurity in all his affections.

"2. And such as man was before the fall, such children also he begat; namely, being corrupted, corrupt ones,—corruption having been derived from Adam to all his posterity, (Christ only excepted,) not by imitation, as the Pelagians formerly would have it, but by the propagation of a vicious nature, through the just judgment of God.

"3. Therefore all men are conceived in sin and born the children of wrath, indisposed (inepti) to all saving good, propense to evil, dead in sin, and the slaves of sin; and, without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit, they neither are willing nor able to return to God, to correct their depraved nature, or to dispose themselves to the correction of it."

In respect to the confession of the Remonstrants, Turretin remarks that "at first they spake ambiguously, so that it was uncertain what position they assumed. But afterward, in their Apology, chapter vii., they plainly show themselves to favour the Socinians, retaining, indeed, the name of imputation, but taking away the thing itself, whilst they declare 'the sin of Adam to be imputed by God to his posterity: not as though he held them to be really guilty of the same sin and crime with Adam, but as he willed them to be born, subject to the same evil to which Adam rendered himself obnoxious by sin.'"<sup>†</sup>

The following is the language of the Apology here alluded to, which was published by the Remonstrants, in reply to a review of their Confession by four of the divines of Leyden:—

"In the fourth section the censor complains that the Remonstrants set forth their opinion on original sin ambiguously; for when they say that 'by this one sin of Adam his posterity are all deprived of that primitive felicity and true righteousness,' &c., they do not mean the sin of Adam to have been imputed so to his posterity, as that in Adam (in culpa fuerunt) they were parties to the crime, &c. This is rashly asserted. The Remonstrants have never said that they did not so mean; nor are the citations from Arminius and Corvinus sufficient to prove it, nor to be ascribed to all the Remonstrants. But neither the Scriptures nor any reason requires that they should say this. They confess that the sin of

\* Scott's Hist. Synod of Dort. Presb. Board of Pub., p. 292.

† Turretini Institutiones Theol., Locus IX. Qu. ix. 3.

Adam may be said to be imputed by God to his posterity, so far forth as God willed the posterity of Adam to be born obnoxious to the same evil to which Adam rendered himself liable by sin; or, in so far as God permitted, the evil which was inflicted upon Adam, as punishment, should flow and pass over to his posterity. But nothing renders it necessary for us to say the sin of Adam to be so imputed to his posterity, as if God really considered the posterity of Adam guilty with Adam of the same sin and crime which Adam committed. Yea, neither the Scriptures nor the truth, wisdom nor goodness of God, the nature of sin, nor the principles of justice and equity, permit that they should represent the sin of Adam to have been so imputed to his posterity. The Scriptures testify God to have threatened the punishment to Adam alone, and to have inflicted it upon Adam only. The divine goodness, truth and wisdom, do not permit that (alienum peccatum alteri proprie imputet) the sin of another should be imputed to one as personally his own, or that that should be imputed (ut proprie) as a personal thing, which was not committed by one's own will. It is contrary to justice and equity that any one should become guilty on account of a sin not his own; that he should be judged truly criminal who, as to his own will, is innocent, or, rather, is not criminal. . . .

"Similar is the next thing which the censor says, 'Nor by the privation of true righteousness do they mean any thing to remain in each of the children of Adam, before his own personal action, which is truly to be called sin.' It is so; for who of a sound mind will believe that by the privation of original righteousness there remains any sin distinct both from that privation, which itself is held to be sin, and from that sin on account of which the privation takes place? He is insane who is willing to admit such a privation. 'But this,' he says, 'is nothing else than to deny original sin altogether, and only to recognise a punishment of sin,—by which, even in his posterity, Adam atones for what he did,—and not to admit that in them there is any thing worthy of abhorrence.' Neither is it necessary to acknowledge it, nor do the Remonstrants admit it; nor that any thing worthy, properly speaking, of the hatred of God, is in Adam's posterity from his sin; nor that, in the posterity of Adam, that which flows from Adam, the sinner, is in them properly called the punishment of sin," &c.\*

#### § 10. The Westminster Assembly, 1643–1648.

The question has been raised, how far the Westminster Assembly based the doctrine of original sin upon our natural relation to Adam. And it is sometimes asserted that it is left entirely out of the account, and the whole matter referred to a positive constitution between God and Adam, without which we would not have been responsible for his sin, and by

\* Apologia pro Conf. Rom. §§ 84, 85; in Op. Episc., vol. ii.



which he was made to be our head. In the early English editions of the Westminster Confession,—those of 1658 and after,—the Scripture proofs were printed in full; and the particular words which were relied upon for the doctrine in question in each place, were put in Italics. So arranged, Chapter vi. § 3, will illustrate the manner in which this subject was viewed by the Assembly.

"They [our first parents] being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, (f) and the same death in sin and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation."

"(f) Genesis i. verse 27. So God created *Man* in his own image, in the image of God created he him, *male and female* created he them. Verse 28. And God blessed *them*, and God said unto *them*, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. Gen. ii. verse 16. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. Verse 17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die*. Acts xvii. 26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. Romans v. verse 12. Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Verse 15. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Verse 16. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. Verse 17. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Verse 18. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. Verse 19. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 1 Cor. xv. verse 21. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. Verse 22. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Verse 45. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Verse 49. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Here, the reason formally given for the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, is, the fact that he was "the root of mankind." Of this statement the Italics in the proof texts constitute a most significant ex-

position. They identify and bring into one view, in the narrative of the creation, the generic title, "*man*," the generative relations, "*male and female*," and the plurality of the race, "*them*." And then, after the blessing of fruitfulness and consequent dominion over the whole earth, and the precept which was the test of obedience, all is bound firmly together and laid upon the race, by the declaration that all are "*one blood*;" constituting the basis upon which is immediately founded the charge that in Adam "*all have sinned*."

Identical with this is the doctrine of the Catechisms. See the Larger Catechism, Qu. 22, 25, 26; Shorter, Qu. 16-19.

In addition to the Confession and Catechisms, the Assembly put forth an epitome, bearing the title,—"*A Brief Sum of Christian Doctrine, contained in Holy Scripture, and holden forth in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms*. Agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and received by the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland. With the Practical Use thereof."\* In this formula, the doctrine of original sin is stated in these terms:—

Head I. § 2. "God in six days made all things of nothing, very good in their own kind, in special he made all the angels holy: and made our first parents Adam and Eve, the root of mankind, both upright and able to keep the law written in their heart: which law they were naturally bound to obey, under pain of death; but God was not bound to reward their service, till he entered into a covenant or contract with them, and their posterity in them, to give them eternal life upon condition of perfect personal obedience, withal threatening death, in case they should fail."

"3. Both angels and men were subject to the change of their own free will, as experience proved, God having reserved to himself the incommunicable property of being naturally unchangeable. For many angels of their own accord fell by sin from their first estate, and became devils: Our first parents being enticed by Satan, one of these devils, speaking in a serpent, did break the covenant of works, in eating the forbidden fruit, whereby they and their posterity, being in their loins, as branches in the root, and comprehended in the same covenant with them, became not only liable to eternal death, but also lost all ability of will to please God; yea, did become by nature enemies to God, and to all spiritual good; and inclined to evil continually. This is our original sin, the bitter root of all our actual transgressions, in thought, word and deed."

#### § 11. Divines of the Westminster Confession.

Dr. Thomas Goodwin was one of the ablest members of the Westminster Assembly, belonging to the party of the Independents, who

\* Although the Brief Sum is by the Church of Scotland received, with the other formularies of the Assembly of Divines, among her symbolical books, the fact that the work was the production of the Assembly, is not, I believe, usually stated in Scotch editions. My copy is the fifth London edition, of 1717.





harmonized perfectly with the other members on the doctrines of the confession. Of his works in folio, the third volume consists of three treatises:—1. Of an Unregenerate Man's Guiltiness before God, in respect of Sin and Punishment; 2. Of Man's Restauration by Grace; 3. Of Christ, the Mediator. In the first of these he enters very fully into the subject of original sin. In respect to the mode in which Adam came to be our representative, he speaks as follows:—

"There are three ways by which it may be conceived or understood that he was a public person:

"1. By the absolute prerogative of God, resolving it wholly into his own secret ordination and appointment of him so to be. Thus some. But this cuts the knot, indeed, but unties it not: and I dare not wholly put it on that account. The covenant with Adam, both for himself and us, was the covenant of nature, as I have shown: and it were hard to say that, in such a covenant, he should use his prerogative alone; and, in some respects, this was higher (if we suppose it such) than that with Christ, with whom he dealt distinctly, fully making known to him all things that concerned that covenant, which he also voluntarily undertook for to his Father, as in that place cited in Isaiah (Isa. xlix. 1-8) and also here appears.

"2. A second way, therefore, is when it is by a covenant; and that, so, as though God's will to have it so that he should represent us, was the main foundation it should be resolved into, yet so as withal, God should plainly utter this, and declare it aforehand to him, as he did to Christ, in that place of Isaiah, 'I will give thee for a covenant to the Gentiles,' &c. Now there is no such record of this, more than what hath been mentioned in the former answer, now extant I know of, whereby God declared he would constitute him such, or laid it explicitly upon him, otherwise than in those particulars which yet I confess by just and like reason do infer it; so as I would not wholly put it upon that account neither; for we read not of God's saying this to him in distinct words, nor of his accepting or undertaking so to be, namely, a public person, that, if he sinned, his posterity should sin in him. Therefore,

"3. I should think it to be mixed of the two latter: both that God made him, or appointed him to be, a public person, as 1 Cor. xv. 45, (see my exposition on those words,) yet not so out of mere will, but that it also had for its foundation, so natural and so necessary a ground as it was rather a natural than a voluntary thing. And necessary it was he should be so appointed, if the law of nature were attained. And to assert this I am induced, among other grounds, by that which, in handling the state of Adam in innocency, I then pursued. That this covenant was a natural covenant, and such as, according to the law of his creation, was due and requisite, and founded upon, and consonant to, the principles of nature; and therefore I judge this law concerning the propagation of man's nature to his posterity to be such, and that God did not put forth

his prerogative in giving forth this alone; but that, it being a part of his covenant by the law of nature, it was therefore so well known to him, by the light and law of nature, that he needed not have it given him by word of mouth; though in those forementioned charters, common to him and his posterity, of having dominion over the creatures, and begetting in his likeness or kind, it was sufficiently held forth; and so as that threatening was to be understood in the same manner by him, 'That day thou eatest, thou shalt die;' wherein all mankind are not only meant, but expressed by the same law that they are in those words, 'Subdue the earth.'—Gen. i. 28. 'And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth;' which are spoken to Adam immediately, and yet meant of his posterity. And it is certain, that, in respect of conveying all that which was good, he was a common person, as in that of conveying a lordship over the creatures, a covenant of life to them, &c.; and, by the same reason, he was a common person to convey sin too. And, truly, those words, that we are said to be 'children of wrath' by nature, I understand not only, though so too, by birth, but even to extend to this sense,—by the law of nature. See my exposition on those words.

"Now the natural necessity, upon which this designation of him to be a public person was made, is this: God had, as author of nature, made this the law of nature,—That man should beget in his own image or likeness; look [like?] what it should prove to be either through his standing or falling, afore he puts this nature out of his hands; and this law is, in their kind, common to beasts. So, then, in this first man, the whole nature of man being reposit as a common receptacle or cistern of it, from whence it was to flow to others; therefore, what befalls this nature in him by any action of his, that nature is so to be propagated from him. God's ordinance, in the law of nature, being,—that all should be made of 'one blood,' which could not have been said of any other man than of him, (no, not of Noah, because of the mixture marriages afore with the posterity of Cain.) And thus, also, man's condition differed from that of the angels, of whom each stood as single persons by themselves, being all and each of them created by God immediately, as even Adam, the first man, himself was. But all men universally, by the law of nature, were to receive their nature from him in his likeness; that is, if he stood and obeyed, then the image of holiness had been conveyed, as it was at first created. If he fell by sin, then, seeing he should thereby corrupt that nature, and that that corruption of nature was also to be his sin in relation to, and as the consequent of, that act of sin that caused it; therefore, if the law of nature were ever fulfilled so as to convey his own image as sinful, (suppose he should sin,) so as it should be reckoned sin in his children, as it was in himself, this could



not take place, but they must be guilty of that act that caused it, so far as it cast [caused?] it, as well as himself. If indeed any way could have been supposed how he might have been bereft of that holiness he was created in, without a precedent act of sinning, as the cause, then indeed we might have said that privation of holiness should not have been reckoned sin, either to himself nor to his posterity, in that case. This corruption of nature, or want of original righteousness, in such case would not have been, nor could not have been, accounted a sin, (a punishment it might,) but it comes only to be a sin as it referreth to, and is connected with, the guilt of an act of sin that caused that corruption of nature. If, therefore, that corruption became truly and properly a sin in them as well as in him, (and else it hath not the *formale* of his image,) he must, necessarily, be constituted a public person, representing them even in respect of that act of sin, which should thus first infect and pollute their nature in him; or else the law of nature will not, in this respect, have its due effect. For that which makes it a sin is not the want of it simply, but as relating to a forfeiture and losing of it by some act those are first guilty of who lose it. Hence, therefore, (I repeat the force of my reason again,) if he will convey this *image* acquired by his *sin as sinful*, there must be a guilt of that act of his sin, which was the cause of it; and therefore he must be a public person in that first act of sin, so as without this, as the case stood, the law of nature could not have had its course.”\*

We might further quote largely from this writer to the same purpose. He everywhere insists that the sin of Adam is so ours as to require of us contrition for it; and devotes an entire chapter to urge this duty.

Whilst the Westminster Assembly was in session, fifty-eight of the most eminent pastors of the city of London, all of them Presbyterians, and of whom seventeen were members of the Assembly, published a “Testimony to the truth of Jesus Christ,” and in opposition to the prevailing errors. Dr. William Lyford, who had been called, but prevented by disease from attending upon the Assembly, commenced the preparation of a work designed as “a discovery of the errors, heresies and blasphemies of these times, and the toleration of them, as they are collected and testified against by the ministers of London.” The increase of his disease put an end to this work when but partly completed. On the subject of our relation to Adam’s sin, this writer says that “No man is cast into hell for Adam’s sin, himself being innocent; but in Adam we all sinned. No man dies of another’s disease; but, if we are infected with the same, we die of our own disease. The prophet Ezekiel says (ch. xviii.) that ‘the just child of a wicked father shall live: if he seeth all that his father hath done, and considereth, and doth not the like, he shall surely live,’—ver. 14–17; but if the son commit the like sins as the father did, then ‘they shall bear

their own iniquity.’—Ver. 13. This is our case in relation to Adam; we are all wicked sons of a wicked father. There is none of us that doeth good; no, not one. All Adam’s sons are wrapped in his sin; all are under that common guilt. Bring forth a clean son out of Adam’s loins, and he shall live. There is *duplex reatus, proprius, et communis*. I am guilty of some sins, which another is not; and another is guilty of sins, which I am not: we have our proper faults. But this one offence, of which Paul speaks, (Rom. v. 12, 18, 19,) involves us all in one common guilt. By it, all of us, being in Adam’s loins, are alike guilty; and, therefore, even by that rule,—‘The soul that sinneth, it shall die,’—we must all die, because we all have sinned. ‘Sicut omnium hominum natura, ita etiam omnium voluntas, originaliter fuit in Adamo.’”\*

We shall hereafter see the testimony of Rutherford, a member of the Assembly, of Poole, of Owen, and of Dickinson; in harmony with Parnus, Witsius, De Moor, and Hoornbeek.† To these we will only here add that of Boston. “I shall show how Adam’s sin of breaking the covenant of works is our sin,—our breaking of it as well as his. It is really ours in itself. It is not ours in its effects only, as a father’s sin in riotously spending his estate reaches his whole family, reducing them to poverty and want. Though the effects of that riotous spending—the poverty, misery and want—are theirs, yet the riotous spending is the father’s only. But so it is not in this case. It is true, the effects of it—the sinful and penal evils following this sin—are ours; we see them, we feel them, and the most stupid groan under them. But the sin itself is ours, too; and,—(1.) The guilt of it is ours. . . . (2.) The fault is ours,—Rom. v. 12:—‘By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;’ namely, in Adam. The fault lies in its contrariety to the holy commandment: this made it a faulty deed, a criminal action, a sin against God; and, as such, it is ours. We in Adam transgressed the law,—broke through the hedge,—and so broke the covenant. If the fault were not ours, a holy God would never punish us for it; but certain it is that he does punish the children of Adam for it. Rom. v. 14:—‘Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.’ . . . (3.) The stain and blot of it is ours. The whole nature of man was tainted with it,—vitiated and blackened; and, through defilement and loathsomeness thereby, rendered incapable of, and quite unfit for, communion with God. (Gen. iii. 24.) This sin defiled the whole mass of man’s nature, from our father Adam going through all his posterity, like leaven through the whole lump.

\* The Instructed Christian; or, The Plain Man’s Senses Exercised to Discern both Good and Evil. By William Lyford, B.D., late minister of the gospel at Sherbourn, in the west of England. Republished: Philadelphia, 1847, p. 243.

† See below, pp. 443, 468, 474, 482, 505, 506, 507.





1 Cor. xv. 22:—"In Adam all die;" their souls die spiritually: his whole race become as dead corpses."\*

§ 12. *The Placcæan Doctrine.*

The doctrine which is known under the designation of mediate imputation, originated with Joshua de la Place, more commonly called, Placcæus, —a professor in the French Reformed seminary of theology at Saumur. Placcæus at first taught that original sin consists solely in the native depravity which we derive from Adam. This opinion was condemned by the National Synod of the French Reformed church, in 1645. "Placcæus, however, contended that the decree of the Synod did not have reference to him; and, among other reasons for this, especially, that he did not deny absolutely the imputation of Adam's sin, but only a certain mode of it;—he denied immediate and recognised mediate imputation; that, native corruption intervening, we are subjected to all the punishments of sin, which Adam deserved by transgression, and by contracting habitual corruption through the first actual sin. He held original corruption to be inherent in us, through the ordinary generation of our nature from Adam, according to the law of nature, by which like begets like; whence, from parents corrupt, and destitute of original righteousness and holiness, corrupt children must be born. 'This being agreed,' says Placcæus, 'imputation is to be distinguished into immediate or antecedent, and mediate or consequent. The one takes place immediately; that is, corruption of nature not intervening;—the other, mediately; that is, corruption intervening. The one, in the order of nature, precedes the corruption; the other follows it. The former is regarded as the cause of the corruption; the latter, its effect. The former Placcæus rejects; the other he admits.'"<sup>†</sup>

His doctrine was promulgated by Placcæus whilst the Westminster Assembly was in actual session. In fact, it was not until it had been dissolved six years, that, in 1655, he published the treatise in which he retreats behind the figment of mediate imputation. It is not improbable that the discussion at the time going on in France induced the Assembly to give a more precise enunciation of the doctrine of original sin imputed, than is to be found in any other Protestant confession.

It was in reference to the errors of Placcæus, and those of Amyraut and Cappel, professors in the same institution, at Saumur, that the Formula Consensus Helvetica was drawn up and published. In this testimony the Swiss theologians repudiate the Placcæan doctrine in the following terms.

"As God made the covenant of works with Adam, not only for himself, but, in him as the head and root, with the whole human race, about to descend from him by virtue of the blessing upon his nature; and to in-

herit the same rectitude had he persisted in it; so Adam, in his grievous fall, sinned not only for himself, but also for the whole human race which should be born of blood and the will of the flesh, and forfeited the gifts promised in the covenant. We therefore hold the sin of Adam to be imputed to all his posterity by the secret and just judgment of God. For the apostle testifies that 'in Adam all have sinned;' that 'by the disobedience of one many were made sinners;' and, that 'in him all die.'—Rom. v. 12, 19; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. Nor indeed does any mode appear in which hereditary corruption, as well as spiritual death, could seize upon the whole human race, by the just judgment of God, unless some crime of the same human race had preceded, inducing the guilt of that death; since God, the just judge of all the earth, will punish none (*nisi sentem*) except the criminal.

"After sin, therefore, a man by nature, and hence from his origin, is subject to the wrath and curse of God upon a double charge, before he has in his own person committed any actual sin; first, on account of the (*παράνομια*) transgression and disobedience which he committed in the loins of Adam; and then for the consequent hereditary depravity, infused in his very conception, by which his whole nature is depraved, and spiritually dead; thus, therefore, as is truly asserted, original sin is twofold; to wit, imputed, and hereditary inherent."

§ 13. *The System of Edwards.*

In the following pages we shall have occasion to notice particularly several elements of the system of Edwards. Fundamental to the whole, were his doctrines respecting second causes and identity. On the former subject, denying the creatures to have in them any other causative force than the immediate power of God, or any other kind of existence than such as is consistent with continual evanition and new creation out of nothing,—he was shut up to his doctrine of identity, as the necessary result; to wit, that there is really no true identity, in any case, between things which exist in different time and place,—the moon or the person that now is, with that which was a moment since;—that the only identity possible is that which arises from the mere arbitrary will of God, determining that such and such things shall be held to be one.

The doctrine of imputation held by Edwards is logically irreconcilable with this theory of identity. If the only oneness that is possible is such as results from the arbitrary sovereignty of God "making truth" out of an untruth, and if by that power we are "constituted" truly one with Adam, then manifestly we are as really and personally the parties that plucked and ate, as were they who after the transgression heard the voice of God, and fled from his presence. But the moral nature of Edwards, true to itself, although betrayed by his philosophy, revolted from this conclusion. Having assumed the very position of Abelard, he attempts to fortify it by recourse to the aid of Placcæus.—By an "arbitrary constitution" God

\* Boston on the Covenant of Works. Head iii. 2.

† De Moorus, Com. in J. Marck. Lugd. Batav. 1765. Cap. xv. § 32. Pars iii. p. 263.





has made us one with Adam the sinner. Hence his sin is truly and personally ours, and justly chargeable to us;—*especially*, since we are guilty of endorsing the deed by the actings of our own depravity. But why the “*especially*”? If I did the deed, no after fact can make it mine any more or less than it is already.

Two other doctrines occupied conspicuous places in the theology of Edwards. The first is, that all holiness or virtue consists in disinterested benevolence; or, as expressed by Edwards, in “love to being as such,” and all sin, in selfishness. The second grows out of this, and is the optimistic theory. If holiness consists in disinterested benevolence, then God, as a holy being, was bound, when he created the universe, to bring into existence the best possible system,—that which will secure the greatest happiness to the greatest number.

These were the principles which—engrafted by Edwards into the theology of the pilgrims—at once developed the system which, in its various phases, was propagated by Hopkins, Smalley, the younger Edwards, Emmons, and their associates. The logical process was brief and simple, and the conclusions inevitable:—If the creatures be no causes,—if God is the immediate and only cause, he is the sole cause of sin, both in Adam and us. If there be no powers in man's nature,—if the phenomena of his existence and actions are the immediate effects of the power of God,—there can be no native tendencies or dispositions, of which to predicate holiness or sin; these can consist in nothing but acts. If Adam's nature is not a cause of his posterity, it cannot be the cause of their depravity: God, the only cause, produces it in them. If there is no real identity possible in things which exist in different time and place,—if we are one with Adam only by “constitution” and legal intentment,—then his sin is, in no sense, really ours; and justice cannot exact its penalty of us. God may, in sovereignty, act toward us as he would toward sinners; but the inflictions with which we are visited, in consequence of Adam's sin, are not of a punitive character. Again: for the same reason, Christ could not so unite himself with our race, as to be held really accountable for our sins, or truly responsible to the penalty. Nor, on the other hand, can we be so united to him as to acquire any truly proprietary title in his righteousness. The consequence is, that Christ's atonement is denied any strictly vicarious character;—it was a governmental display, not a satisfaction; it was made for sins in general, and not specifically for the sins of his people; and his work was not determinate of the redemption of any one, but only opened the way for the salvation of those who shall believe. Such were the positions of the earlier disciples of Edwards. They rejected, at once, his untenable appeal—untenable on his principles—to the distinction between a positive and a privative cause, to account for God's agency in the production of sin, and did not hesitate, directly, and in terms, to attribute all sinful

actions to the immediate efficient agency of God. But, falling back upon the optimistic principle, they held that since God was bound to produce the best possible system, and is a most powerful and excellent being, we are shut up to the conclusion that the present system is the best; and, sin being found in this system, it is inferred that sin is an incident of the best system, and necessary to it. Sin, therefore, thus viewed, upon the whole, is not an evil, but a good; and hence it is consistent with God's character to produce it. It is only an evil, in that the sinner is not actuated by any such apprehension as this, but by selfish and malevolent feelings. Retaining the old forms of speech, these writers utterly rejected the old doctrines of original sin and justification.

So stood the “orthodox” theology of New England at the rise of the school of New Haven. And it is a significant fact, that the first public announcement of the inauguration of a new school of theology, by the professors in that institution, addressed a challenge to the optimists of the prevailing school to justify themselves in assuming that God could prevent all sin in a moral system.\* Thus did the revolting fatalism which was involved in Edwards' theory of causation induce a recoil to the opposite extreme, in the assertion of Pelagian free will. The divines of New Haven found, in the very heart of Edwards' system, some of the fundamental and most fruitful features of the doctrine of Pelagius:—that Adam was not the cause of his posterity;—that, of consequence, they were not really, in him, in the covenant;—that his sin is not theirs, nor its punishment visited on them;—that depravity is not derived from Adam to his posterity;—and that sin consists in exercise or action. Accepting these as unquestionable principles, and recoiling, with just abhorrence, from the idea that God is the author of men's sins, they adopted the other alternative deducible from the premises, and concluded that men are created without moral character, and that their depravity is the result of example and circumstances. Boldly repudiating the system of constituted relations and fictitious intendments, by which the Hopkinsians had maintained a semblance of orthodoxy, they utterly denied any federal union between us and Adam, or any vicarious relation of Christ to his people. Every man comes into the world in the same moral and legal attitude as did Adam. Each one sins and falls by his own free will. Christ died, not as a legal substitute for us,—a vicarious satisfaction for our sins,—but as an exhibition of the love of God to sinners, and a display of the evil of sin; so that God may, consistently with the welfare of the universe, forgive sin. The sinner is pardoned, not justified;—sin is forgiven, not taken away;—and justice is waived, not satisfied. Again, supposing man's free will competent to sin in spite of God, it follows that the same power can cease to

\* Taylor's *Concilio ad Clerum*, 1828, p. 29.



sin, independent of the Spirit of God. Regeneration is therefore the effect of moral suasion calling into exercise the unaided powers of man's own will.

There are probably few who would now be willing to adopt, in its abstract form, the theory of identity which is fundamental to the system of Edwards. But by many it is accepted in its application to the doctrine of original sin,—the very case for which it was invented. By them it is maintained that we are not, in any real sense, one with Adam; but, by a positive constitution, God has so ordered it that we are regarded and treated as one.\* And yet, with all, we are no more intrinsically one with him, nor chargeable with his crime, than we were before. We are only held liable to undergo punishment on account of it. That punishment consists in the privation of original righteousness, and the consequent depravation of the soul. How much more this view harmonizes with that of Abelard and the schoolmen than with the Reformed confessions a glance will demonstrate. How foreign to the latter, is manifest. In those confessions, from the first to the last, we search in vain for a trace of the positive constitution here imagined, or a hint that the depravity of the race came upon it as the punishment of a foreign sin. On the contrary, they are unanimous in the testimony that not Adam but man sinned in the act of disobedience, and, by the effects of the sin, was depraved;—that the race, generically, apostatized from holiness, and embraced depravity, in the person of Adam. In particular, the Westminster Confession, written when the Placæan controversy induced special care on these very points, knows nothing of the constructive system; but bases all its positions on our seminal inbeing in Adam; and, discriminating carefully between the criminal and the penal elements of Adam's sin, includes in the former the want of original righteousness and the corruption of nature; and charges the whole immediately upon us as elements of the sinfulness of that estate into which we fell by sinning in Adam; whilst all this is excluded from any place in the penal element,—the miseries incurred.

We venerate the memory of Edwards; and esteem and love many of the disciples of his theology. But the history of a century confirms the conviction resulting from *a priori* considerations, that the principles of his system are irreconcilably hostile to the doctrines of grace which he loved; and must operate, as heretofore, so always, to corrupt and destroy them.

\* "What exists at this moment . . . is a new effect, and, simply and absolutely considered, not the same with any past effect. . . . And there is no identity or oneness, in the case, but what depends on the arbitrary constitution of the Creator; who, by his wise sovereign establishment, so unites these successive new effects that he treats them as one, by communicating to them like properties, relations and circumstances; and so leads us to regard and treat them as one."—*Edwards on Original Sin*, Part iv. ch. 2.

THE

## ELOHIM REVEALED.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE TRIUNE CREATOR.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." With this announcement the Spirit of God commences the sacred volume. He is about to put upon permanent record a revelation, intended to answer all those questions which spontaneously spring, in the depths of the human soul, concerning our highest and eternal interests,—a revelation respecting the nature of God, the cause and the remedy of our ruinous estate, the purpose for which life is given, the immortality of man, and the alternative states of eternity,—themes which have perplexed and bewildered philosophers and sages in every age. The first line of the first page of this blessed book announces Him, whose nature and whose works are the theme of the whole. It unveils in sudden light a glorious One, whose lustre increases through every page; like a morning sun, growing continually in radiant majesty, pouring abroad a flood of unapproachable glory, alone in a starless firmament. When the student of the sacred volume reads, in that first line, the sublime announcement,—"In the beginning, God,"—he, at one bound, ascends a height as far above that lofty Olympus where fabled Jove sat enthroned, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Thus, taught the alone eternity of God, the Creator, and the temporary origin of all things else, visible and invisible, he has already gained a sublimity of science, which all the wisdom





and research of classic philosophy never attained. Gazing abroad from this mountain pinnacle,—on the one hand is nothing but the eternity of God; on the other is the creation, just launching forth upon cycles, each one of which is the unfolding of a new chapter, in the revelation of the high and lofty One who inhabits that eternity. Before we attempt to trace the operations of his hand, in the works of creation and the scheme of providence, we will briefly and reverently glance at some things, which are made known to us in the Scriptures, in respect to the nature and purposes of the Creator.

The first point here claiming our notice is, that it is not merely God, but the Triune God, who is announced as the maker of all things. We do not design to enter at large into the argument, in proof of the fact that the name, Elohim, being plural in its form, is a distinct intimation of the plurality which subsists in the unity of the divine essence. Not only does the name itself—commonly, as in this place, used in the plural number, though with a verb in the singular—point to that fundamental fact in the nature of Him whom the creation was designed to proclaim, but, in the 26th verse, we are informed of a conference of the Elohim, in which it is said, "Let *us* make man, in *our* image, after *our* likeness;" and again, when man had fallen, "the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as *one* of *us*."—Gen. iii. 22. In the book of Ecclesiastes, the preacher admonishes the young, "Remember now (זָכוּר) thy *Creators*."—Eccl. xii. 1. Says Elihu, "None saith, Where is (אֵימָה) God my *Makers*?"—Job xxxv. 10,—thus using the name of God in the singular, whilst the appellative, "*Makers*," is in the plural. The Psalmist writes,—"Let Israel rejoice (שִׂמְחָה) in his *Makers*,"—Ps. cxlix. 2; and Isaiah assures his people "(בְּעֵלֵינוּ) Thy *Makers* are thy *husbands*, the Lord of hosts is (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) *his* name."—Isa. liv. 5.

Not only does the name of the Creator itself announce the work as the production of the Sacred Three, but in the progress of the narrative we have distinct intimation of the presence and several agency of the Three Persons of the Godhead. The first chapter, and down to the fourth verse of the second, is a rapid and comprehensive sketch of the whole work of creation, prefatory to the

more particular account of the creation of man, which occupies the remainder of the second chapter. Throughout the first part of the narrative thus divided, the work is, by the name, Elohim, referred to God the Father; that name being in the Scriptures almost exclusively applied to the First Person, as the representative of the Godhead. From the fourth verse of the second chapter, the title is changed; and in the particular narrative there begun it is Jehovah Elohim—the Lord God—who is represented as the actor. By this name is designated that glorious Jehovah Christ, "by whom God made the worlds,"—Heb. i. 2. That he was meant by the name, Lord God, is demonstrable. On this point we will only pause to cite the testimony of the Son of God himself, in the last chapter of the book of Revelation, v. 6:—"The LORD GOD of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done." v. 16:—"I JESUS have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." Jesus, then, is the Lord God of the Old Testament writers. Here the reader will not fail to recall the account with which John commences his Gospel:—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him."—John i. 1-3. In this connection the fact is very striking, that when, in the midst of that portion of the sacred record in which the title, Lord God, is constantly used, we come to the interview between the tempter and the woman, the style is changed. Satan, aiming to seduce the woman to a forgetfulness of the ever-present God, ignores that Lord God who was, alike, the creative Mediator to innocent man, as he is the atoning Mediator to man fallen. Thus, putting God afar off, he asks, "Hath God said?" The woman falls into the snare, and replies, "God hath said." But it was not Elohim, God, but the Lord God, who alike gave the command and called the pair to account for disobedience. (Gen. ii. 16, iii. 9.)

Nor are we without evidence of the presence and operation of the Third Person of the Godhead. Not only is his agency announced in the second verse of Moses' narrative,—"*the*



Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters,"—but in the account of man's creation the Spirit's action is distinctly marked in the statement that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life."—Gen. ii. 7. With this compare the language of Elihu:—"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."—Job xxxiii. 4. Says Job, "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."—Job xxvi. 13. And the Psalmist sings, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth."—Ps. civ. 30.

The distinctive characteristics of the several persons of the Godhead are intimated in their names. The Father, the Son, and, the Spirit,—these are the designations habitually employed in the Scriptures to distinguish the several subsistences which coexist in the unity of the Godhead, in respect to their relation to each other. In

entering upon the consideration of the distinctions thus implied, we are to remember that, whereas it were impious to search curiously into the mystery of the divine nature beyond what is written, it is no less impious to refuse to hear, or to regard with indifference, whatever on these subjects God has made known. That the names, Father and Son, indicate relations of the First and Second Persons to each other, which are necessary, essential, and eternal—has been the faith of the Church of God in all ages, and is clearly demonstrable from the Scriptures. Says the Psalmist:—"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," &c.—Ps. ii. 7, 8. Here observe: (1) That the sonship thus announced is not created by the decree; but is expressly asserted to be prior to it, and produced by generation. (2.) "This day" does not define a temporal period when the generation took place. Had such been the design, an appreciable date would have been specified, in definite terms. But when, without any such limitation, such a phrase is used by the eternal God, in an address to a coeternal Person, the transaction is thus referred to his eternity. (3.) The sonship is the

declared cause of the decree, and therefore antecedent to it. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."—John iii. 35. (4.) The date of the decree is eternity. It constitutes an element in the provisions of the everlasting covenant, in the terms and conditions of which, everywhere, as well as here, the Son being recognised and dealt with as possessing the filial relation, and as, therefore, invested with the offices assigned to him in the covenant, the conclusion is inevitable that the sonship is eternal. There is in this Psalm another mode of fixing the date of the whole transaction. The heathen are represented as raging against the Lord and his anointed. "Yet," says God, "have I set ('הקדש inaugurated, installed) my king upon my holy hill of Zion." The date of this inauguration will appear in the next Scripture to which we turn.

Prov. viii. 22-31:—"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up ('הקדש inaugurated) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

That, under the name of Wisdom, this Scripture describes a personal subsistence,—the Second Person of the Trinity,—appears, from considerations, at some only of which we can at present glance. The whole style of the discourse, and the force of the several expressions in it, imply a personal subject; and are entirely incompatible with the reference of the language to the





divine attribute of wisdom, or any interpretation which does not recognise the speaker as a distinct personality. Thus he says, "I Wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength."—v. 12, 14. With what pretence of propriety can we suppose the attribute of wisdom to describe itself, thus, as endowed with counsel, wisdom, understanding, and strength? "I Wisdom have sound wisdom!" Still more incongruous are the ideas which by this interpretation are brought together in the next clause. "I Wisdom am understanding." Here we are introduced to a most extraordinary and perplexing complication of figures. It is supposed that the divine wisdom is figuratively exhibited as a person, addressing her admonitions and instruction to the sons of men. Then the attribute thus personified employs a figure, by which it throws off this personality, and is transformed into a different attribute. The wisdom of God, by *prosopopœia*, becomes a speaker; and then, by metaphor, is transformed back again into an attribute; but in the process loses its identity; and is now the divine understanding! Further, what meaning is supposed to couch in the statement respecting the attribute of God's wisdom, that by it "kings reign, and princes decree justice, princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth"?—v. 15, 16. We understand the apostle, when he speaks of Christ as "the Prince of the kings of the earth," "the King of kings and Lord of lords."—Rev. i. 5, xix. 16. But in any other sense than this, we are unable to see the propriety of the language here applied as descriptive of Wisdom. In the verses that follow, we find Wisdom represented as existing externally to the person of the Father; who is designated by the name, Lord. v. 22:—"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." "The Lord (*אֲדֹנָי*) acquired me." The word expresses,—not that which is immanent in one, as is the attribute of wisdom in God,—but an acquired possession; and is employed to express the acquisition of children by generation. In the case of the first born of men, typical of all the rest, we are told that Eve bare (*יָלְדָה*) Cain, "saying, (*קָנִיתִי*) I have gotten

a man from the Lord."—Gen. iv. 1. Evidently, such language as is thus used of Wisdom is entirely inappropriate to the *attribute*, which is essential in the nature of God. If it should be objected, that it is equally inappropriate to the Son, as eternal,—this raises a question, which will afterwards be considered. v. 23:—"I was set up (inaugurated) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." We have seen in the second Psalm an announcement of such an inauguration of the Son. But how can such phraseology be applied to a divine perfection? Is it not directly opposed to the whole teaching of the Scriptures, and to all just conceptions of the nature of God, to suppose any one divine attribute exalted above the rest? Is wisdom preferred to justice, love, mercy, or holiness? v. 30:—"Then was I (*אֲנִי*) at his side, a cherished child, and I was daily his delight, (*דִּשְׁחַנְתִּי* לְפָנָיו בְּכָל-יֶמֶת) sporting always before him." "This word (*אֲנִי* at his side, by him) signally declares the personality of Wisdom; for in all the places where it occurs, which are sixty-two, there is not one in which it does not designate that manner of vicinity which occurs between two distinct things."\* The force of the word which we render, "a cherished child," is illustrated in Num. xi. 12:—"Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom as he, (*חָמָלָם*) a nursing father, beareth the sucking child?" The word which we have rendered "sporting," does not express mere gladness or joy; but such actions as are designed and calculated to express and impart enjoyment. Thus, it is used to describe the conduct of Samson, when he "made sport" for the Philistines, (Judges xvi. 25, 27;) and to represent the behaviour of David, when he "played" before the ark. (2 Sam. vi. 5, 21.) It is employed by Zechariah, when, speaking of Jerusalem, at that time desolate, he says, "The streets of the city shall yet be full of boys and girls, *playing* in the streets thereof."—Zech. viii. 5. "Sporting always before him,"—that is, as does a child in the presence of the loved parent, striving to elicit a smile. The force of the expression is still further strengthened by what fol-

\* Gejerus in Poole's Synopsis, on the place.





lows. v. 31:—"Sporting in the habitable parts of the earth;"—there seeking to give the Father pleasure. Thus speaking, he anticipates, as present to his eternal mind, the course of his life in the flesh; which drew forth the Father's repeated testimony, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"—Matt. iii. 17; and respecting which himself declares, "The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him."—John viii. 29.

The Lord Jesus Christ asserts a claim to this name of Wisdom; and it is attributed to him by the New Testament writers.

*§ 4. The Wisdom of God in Christ.* Said Jesus to the Jews, "Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Therefore also said the Wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute."—Luke xi. 49. In Matthew we have an account of this same discourse, in which the declarations and warnings which are here predicated of the Wisdom of God, are ascribed to Jesus himself. "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men."—Matt. xxiii. 34. Even if it be supposed that, in the former place, by the sayings of the Wisdom of God, the Old Testament prophecies are meant, yet is it unquestionable that they are the testimonies of Jesus by his Spirit. "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy."—Rev. xix. 10. And Peter declares that the prophets knew not, "what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify."—1 Pet. i. 11. So that, by Wisdom, Christ can here mean no other than himself. Again, the Saviour designates himself in a similar way, in Matt. xi. 19:—"Whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation? For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But Wisdom is justified of her children." Hence Paul proclaims "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 24. And again, with a manifest reference to Him whom we have seen in the second Psalm, and in the place now under discussion, to have been installed

from everlasting, he says, "We speak the Wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden Wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."—1 Cor. ii. 7, 8.

Again: the things which, in the book of Proverbs, are spoken of Wisdom, all apply with the most perfect propriety to the Son of God; and some of them can with no tolerable fitness be appropriated in any other way, than to him. Of this, we have already had some evidence. For the rest, we can only glance at a few points.

The history and character of Wisdom present a remarkable correspondence with those of Christ. Wisdom was in the beginning; she was from everlasting with God; was present at the creation, and was the author of creation. (Prov. viii. 23, 27, 30, iii. 19; with which compare John i. 1-3, and Heb. i. 2.) By her the events of providence are ordered. (Prov. iii. 20, viii. 21; compare Heb. i. 3, Col. i. 16, 17.) By her kings and princes hold their sceptres and power. (Prov. viii. 15, 16; compare Rev. xix. 16.) Among her most signal characteristics are tender love to men, (Prov. viii. 17, 31, i. 22, 23,) and a high regard to the claims of justice against incorrigible sinners. (Prov. i. 28-32; compare Luke xiv. 16-24.) She hates "pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth." And her distinguishing attributes are counsel, sound wisdom, understanding, and strength. (Prov. viii. 13, 14; compare Isa. xlv. 24; 1 Cor. i. 30.)

Wisdom's attitude towards man is equally descriptive of the Lord Jesus Christ. With what freedom and publicity are her invitations urged! (Prov. i. 21, viii. 1-4, ix. 3; compare John vii. 37, Matt. x. 27.) Her gifts, though free, are to be won by earnestness and importunity in the pursuit. (Prov. ii. 3, 4; compare Luke xiii. 24, Matt. xi. 12.) Their value is better than silver and hid treasures, fine gold and rubies. (Prov. ii. 4, iii. 14, 15, viii. 10, 18, 19; compare Rev. iii. 18.) And, when we come to hear what these gifts are, we must recognise them as coming from the Son of God, and from no other. She promises



to introduce us to the knowledge of God, (Prov. ii. 5; compare John xvii. 3, 6, xiv. 9, i. 18,) and to pour out upon us the Spirit of God. (Prov. i. 23; compare John xvi. 7.) She offers to sinners, righteousness,—a gift which in all the treasures of God's universe is only to be found in Christ. (Prov. viii. 18; compare Jer. xxiii. 6.) She engages to bestow upon her followers safety and tranquillity, (Prov. i. 33; compare Matt. xi. 28, 29,) a guardian care and guidance, (Prov. ii. 7, 8, 11–13,) a crown of glory, (Prov. iv. 9; compare 2 Tim. iv. 8,) durable riches, (Prov. viii. 18; compare Matt. vi. 20, Rev. iii. 18,) and life and the favour of the Lord. (Prov. iii. 16, 18, viii. 35; compare Rev. ii. 7, and John vi. 54.)

The glance thus taken will, we trust, be sufficient to satisfy the reader, that Wisdom, who speaks in the book of Proverbs, and particularly in the eighth chapter, is a person distinct from God the Father, and can be no other than his beloved and eternal Son. It is he that says, "The Lord acquired me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." "When there were no depths, I was brought forth." "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." "When he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I at his side, a nourished child."

In the 30th chapter of Proverbs there is another signal testimony on the subject of our inquiry:—"I neither learned Wisdom nor have the knowledge of (קִישָׁר) the Holy Ones. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the winds in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"—Prov. xxx. 3, 4. These are "the words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal." The name, Ithiel, is identical in meaning with Immanuel, the number only being changed,—God with me; and Ucal signifies, the mighty One. And judicious interpreters have translated the clause, "The man spake concerning God with me, even God with me, the mighty One." But, aside from this interpretation, the pass-

§ 5. *Proverbs*  
xxx. 3, 4, and  
*Micah* v. 2.

age has several things unquestionable and conclusive on the subject of which we treat. 1. His theme, Agur presents as mysterious and unsearchable. This he declares, in the first place, by protestations of his own ignorance, and then by the series of questions which we have quoted. He says, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned Wisdom nor have the knowledge of the Holy Ones." 2. His theme is the nature of God, of whom he speaks in the plural number:—the Holy Ones. 3. There is a distinct allusion to the incarnation of the Son of God, in the question, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?" With this, compare Eph. iv. 8–10. 4. Having asserted the inscrutable nature of God the Creator, in the demand, "What is his name?" he attributes to him a Son, of nature as mysterious and unsearchable:—"What is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" It is complained that the style of Agur is obscure. His subject is profound. But he distinctly presents the points here stated, which are conclusive on the subject of the sonship of Christ.

Micah v. 2 constitutes an additional proof of the doctrine before us:—"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." That this text has respect to Christ, Matthew ii. 6 renders unquestionable. It does not in terms declare his eternal sonship. Yet is the place none the less effective to our purpose, since it indicates such a characteristic in the nature of the Son of God, as exactly corresponds with the doctrine of his eternal generation, and is otherwise inexplicable. Says Micah, "His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The word translated "goings forth," does not of itself necessarily mean birth or generation. But it does unquestionably express action of some kind, and cannot be applied to mere purpose or plan of future action. In the present case, it defines action which antedates the entire work of creation; it dates "from of old, from everlasting." It has, therefore, respect to some action, which is appro-





priate to the relations essentially subsisting between the Persons of the Godhead. Further, the word is applicable to generation. This is clearly indicated by the use of the verb, from which the noun here used is derived, in other places. Thus, Gen. xv. 4:—"He that *shall go forth*, out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir." Gen. xxv. 11:—"Kings *shall go forth* out of thy loins." 2 Kings xx. 18:—"Of thy sons which *shall issue* from thee." The plural form of the word, is also observable:—"His *goings forth*." By this expression, implying a continual repetition of the action, is indicated its eternity. An act, viewed in the light of human comprehension, is a momentary and transient thing. In particular, such is the case with a going forth, or a birth. Hence, no more appropriate form could be used to express such action as, being essential in the nature of God, is entirely free from any thing like transition, origin, or termination, than that here used, expressive of perpetual and continuous repetition of the same act.

We come next to the evidence unfolded in the New Testament, in respect to which any thing more than a very cursory glance is impossible. The careful reader of the Gospels cannot fail to recognise therein abundant evidence that the name, Son of God, was familiar to the Jews, altogether irrespective of Christ's claim to it. They recognised it as being the distinctive name of a divine Person, who was equal with God the Father. As so understood by them, Jesus asserted this as his proper name. Upon this ground, he was tried before the Sanhedrim, and condemned, on the charge of blasphemy. When he was on the cross, this accusation was urged against him; with the challenge, that, if he were such as he claimed, he would prove it by coming down. The priests recognised his foretold resurrection as the test of the question; and therefore sealed the stone, and set the guard. And, when he rose, his disciples proclaimed that fact, as the conclusive proof that he was the Son of God. Let us glance at these several points.

In the second Psalm, the Jews had been made familiar with the name of the Son of God. We might further show, were it

necessary, that they understood the passages in Proverbs, in the sense which we have attributed to them. Nebuchadnezzar, who had been fully instructed, as to the coming and history of Messiah's kingdom, by his own prophetic vision of the image, and the stone cut without hands, as well as by the conversation and history of Daniel, shows his familiarity with this name and its meaning, when, upon occasion of the martyrdom of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, he says, "Did not we cast three men bound, into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."—Dan. iii. 25. Hence, when our Saviour came, the Jews, familiar with these Scriptures, at once perceived his claim to the name in question to involve the assertion of divinity. On one occasion, Christ having healed a man on the Sabbath day, he replied to the accusation of Sabbath-breaking, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore sought the Jews the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."—John v. 18. Jesus is so far from modifying or explaining the language, as though he had been misunderstood, that he goes on to expatiate at length in similar terms; and makes various statements as to his prerogatives and powers, which went to sustain the same claim of divinity. He asserts community of working with the Father, and power to renew and transform the living, to raise the dead, and judge the world; and vindicates these claims by appeal to the testimony of his word and works, of John, of Moses, and of the Father.—John v. 19-45. On occasion of healing a blind man, he asks the man, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."—John ix. 35-38. Here, Jesus assumes the man to understand the meaning of this name,—an assumption which his answer fully justified. All he needs is, to be told to whom that dread and glorious title belongs; and, upon being informed, he at once pays him divine worship.



Again, having excited the rage of the Jews, by calling God his Father, and saying, "I and my Father are one," they charge him with blasphemy; "because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Jesus, then, alluding to the Scripture in which it is written of Israel, "I said, Ye are gods," proceeds to vindicate his claim to that title, in a much higher sense; and declares his works to be proof "that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand."—John x. 30-39.

This assertion of sonship to God, was the very ground on which he was accused and condemned by the senate of Israel. "The high-priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death."—Matt. xxvi. 63-66. Afterward, when urging Pilate to gratify their malice, one plea is, "He maketh himself a king;" and the other, "By our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."—John xix. 7-12. These were the charges upon which he was condemned; as the inscription on his cross and the scoffs of those who passed by testify. They reviled him, saying, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God."—Matt. xxvii. 40, 42, 43. How directly all this had respect to the language of the second Psalm, we need not point out. Evidently, its declarations were present to the minds of all the actors. So distinctly and publicly was it recognised, that the question at issue was the divine sonship of Christ, that the Roman centurion, by whom the execution was conducted, overwhelmed by the prodigies which attended the scene, de-

clared them conclusive proof of the justice of his claim. He exclaims, "Truly this was the Son of God."—Matt. xxvii. 54. Accordingly, when he was risen from the dead, he makes his first announcement of the fact to Mary Magdalene, in terms asserting this relation:—"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father."—John xix. 17. The Apostle John closes his narrative, by saying, "These things were written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."—John xx. 31. And Paul, in the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, declares the gospel to be concerning Jesus Christ our Lord, "which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."—Rom. i. 1-4.

Now, let it be observed, that, in the whole course of Christ's ministry, there is not a trace of any hesitation on the part of any one of his hearers, in reference to the meaning of the name, Son of God. Whether Nathanael at Bethsaida, (John i. 49,) his disciples wondering at his power over winds and waves, (Matt. xiv. 33,) the blind man restored to sight; devils in terror of him as their final judge, (Matt. viii. 29,) the people abroad, (John v. 18, x. 30,) or the sanhedrim in council, (Matt. xxvi. 63,) whenever that title was used respecting him, or claimed by him, it is recognised at once and by all as the well-known and appropriate designation of an incommunicable divine nature. In calling himself, Son of God, they regarded him as claiming equality with God. Knowing them so to understand him, he still continues to employ the name; and when put upon oath before the high-priest, affirms the title, and claims that as such he will be the Judge of quick and dead. Can there be any question that the name so employed and signalized was a name of the divine nature of the Saviour of the world?

We have cursorily cited a scripture, which demands more particular notice. Rom. i. 1-4:—"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son

§ 7. *Proofs  
derived from  
the Epistles.*





Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Here, the apostle draws a contrast between the human and divine nature which were in Christ. His human nature is designated by the phrase, (*κατὰ σάρκα*), "according to the flesh;" and his divine nature, by the corresponding expression, (*κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης*), "according to (or, as to) his holy spiritual nature." Of his human nature, his flesh, the apostle predicates a sonship to David. He was "made of the seed of David as to the flesh." But, as to his holy spiritual nature, he was "declared to be the Son of God with power." It is true, that the word here rendered "declared," does sometimes mean, to determine, or decree. But it is also true, that the apostle defines that of which he is speaking, in unequivocal terms, as being that in Christ which was in contrast with his human nature, "his holy spiritual nature." We do not discuss the question of the divinity of Christ; but assume it as unquestionable. Upon this assumption, it is impossible to evade the conclusion, that it is the divine nature of Christ of which Paul speaks, under the designation, "holy, spiritual," and it is of this that he predicates sonship;—sonship, too, which, however demonstrated, as we have seen it was, by his resurrection, could not in any way be produced or originated thereby. In short, if as here asserted his sonship belongs to his divine nature, it must be essential and eternal in that nature; since the nature of God is in every sense unchangeable. The conclusion thus attained, is by Paul presented in its relation to the history of which we have already spoken. When Jesus was on trial, his answer to the demand whether he was the Son of God, was, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."—Mark xiv. 62. To this assertion of his joint Godhead and humanity, and of his authority and power, as God-man, to judge the world at the last day, Paul evidently alludes:—"The gospel which I preach is concerning Jesus Christ our Lord, who was the Son of man, for he was as to his

flesh the son of David; but he was also the Son of God, clothed with power as the judge of quick and dead, at whose voice they that sleep in the dust shall rise; and this he has declared, showing himself to be the Son of God with power, by himself rising from the dead."

We cannot omit a rapid glance at the testimony of Paul, to the Hebrews. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."—Heb. i. 1-4. In respect to this scripture, and the whole argument of the epistle, let these things be observed. 1. The design of the apostle is to signalize to the children of Abraham the pre-eminent glory and excellence of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2. Himself an Hebrew of the Hebrews, Paul was fully aware of the fact that his people regarded the title, Son of God, as a name asserting a supreme and coequal divinity with the Father, as we have already sufficiently seen. 3. Knowing this, the apostle in this deliberately written argument, designed to go nakedly forth, to be understood according to the accepted meaning of its terms, where any explanations, or cautions as to a particular sense, would be impossible, describes the Lord Jesus by this title. 4. To him thus designated, he attributes every characteristic of divinity; and at the same time, in respect to them all, employs terms appropriate to the filial relation to the Father so indicated. It is as the only begotten that he is Son, having "obtained by inheritance" that name which is, by adoption and union with him, conferred on the saints. It is as the Son that he is "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person;" and as Son he is heir and Lord of all things.—Heb. i. 2, iii. 6. By the Son, God "made the worlds." He "upholdeth all things





by the word of his power." In short, to him, as Son, are the title, the dominion and the prerogatives of God emphatically applied. "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom," &c.

Again, in the third chapter, the apostle uses an argument, which is alike conclusive to the divinity and the eternal sonship of Christ. "He was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded (*ὑπὸ τινος*) by some one; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant; . . . but Christ as a Son, over his own house."—Heb. iii. 3-6. Here the glory of Christ is displayed, by contrast with Moses, in the argument that, as he was Moses' maker, he must be infinitely more glorious than that great prophet. Furthermore, inasmuch as, not only of Moses, but of all things, he is the maker and upholder, he must be God; since "he that made all things is God." The apostle, then, in a very remarkable way, identifies the sonship and the divinity of Christ. Moses was faithful as a servant; "but Christ as a Son over his own house." As Son, he was the Father's agent in creating all things; and, as Son, he is proprietor of all things, by a double title: first, as thus by him they were made; and, second, as he, being Son, is heir to the Father. He, therefore, as Son, exercises a most unquestionable right, when he rules all things; since they are "his own house."

Were it necessary, we might insist upon the many passages where the language clearly implies the relation of the Father and Son to have subsisted prior to any of the transactions in the plan of redemption; on which it is sometimes attempted to predicate the origination of these names. Thus, when our Saviour says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son. . . . For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world,"—John iii. 16, 17, the entire force of the argument in proof of the love of God, turns upon the assumption that he whom he ordained and sent, was his Son prior to his mission;—that, in

§ 8. Other  
scriptural ar-  
guments.

giving him to the world, he was robbing himself of a relation so near and tender. To say that he became the Son of God, by coming into the world, or after his coming, is to deprive the argument of the Saviour of its preciousness and force. A person professes special kindness to another. In proof of it, he asserts that, on the other's behalf, he had hazarded the life of his own son. But, on inquiry, it appears that the sonship is only by adoption; and that its date is subsequent to the transaction referred to. Who would not condemn the statement as doubly false? first, in calling him an own son, who was only an adopted child; and, second, in presenting the relation as an element in an occurrence which took place before the relation had existence? Yet such is the impeachment to which Christ, in his language to Nicodemus, and his apostles, in many similar places, are exposed, by the interpretation which denies the eternal sonship.

It is worthy of serious consideration, that the rejection of this doctrine involves principles which utterly impoverish the testimony of the Scriptures, on the subject of the adoption and sonship which belong to the people of God. That adoption does not consist in a mere arbitrary designating and treating of them as sons. But they are sons by virtue of their being the members, the seed, of Christ the only-begotten Son. "According to our doctrine, Christ has made us the sons of God, together with himself, by the privilege of a fraternal union, because he is, in our nature, which he assumed, the only-begotten Son of God."\* Now, if Christ's sonship be native, we recognise a precious reality in a sonship to God, consequent upon union with him. But, if Christ's own sonship is merely adoptive, the whole conception of our relation to the Father becomes obscure and inane. Then, either are we, by the immediate adoption of the Father, as nearly related as is the only-begotten; or else, Christ being the medium, our relation is that of adoption in the second degree,—adopted sons through him who is but the adopted Son. In short, whenever and however he became so, Christ is not an adopted son, but the only begotten.

\* Calvin's Institutes, Book II. xiv. 7.



The attempt is made to evade the force of the abundant arguments, at some of which we have glanced, by the suggestion, that Christ was Son of God, by virtue of his miraculous conception; or, of his resurrection from the dead. In proof of the former position, appeal is made to the language of the angel to Mary:—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."—Luke i. 35. But, even were we to allow the interpretation which is contended for, it does not involve the conclusion upon which opposers of our doctrine insist. This same writer, Luke, traces the genealogy of Jesus to Adam, "which was the son of God."—Luke iii. 38. And it is unquestionable that, as Adam was the son of God, by virtue of the immediate agency of God in his creation, so, in a very analogous manner, the second Adam, as to his human nature, was a son of God by virtue of the miraculous mode of his generation, which is spoken of by the angel. But this, so far from precluding the doctrine of the eternal sonship, is entirely congruous with it. It would seem eminently becoming, that the eternal Son, in uniting his nature with that of man, should be invested with a humanity sustaining to the Father a relation as nearly filial as man's nature may. We, therefore, readily admit that this was comprehended in the meaning of the angel. But, that it was all which he meant, we most strenuously deny; and if it was all which Mary herself understood, or was intended to understand,—which is by no means to be admitted,—she would but be in the condition in which were the prophets. They were conscious of very inadequate conceptions respecting the things which are now by us clearly understood in their writings. (1 Pet. i. 10-12.) Whilst the man, Christ Jesus, was son of God, by virtue of his miraculous conception; the mediatorial person was in a much higher sense the Son, the only-begotten, of the Father. He is so, by virtue of the fact, that, in him, the Second Person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God, is one person with the son of Mary. And it is in reference to the typical relation of the first Adam to the second;

that the former, although sustaining a relation to God which was only a shadow of that of Christ, is designated, "son of God." The testimony of all the Scriptures is in harmony with this interpretation of the language of the angel; whilst the other is open to several insurmountable objections. It entirely ignores the eternity of the generation, which, as we have seen, the Scriptures elsewhere unequivocally attest. Further, it is the Holy Spirit, and not the Father, to whom the miraculous conception is attributed; and yet Christ is never called the Son of the Spirit. Not only so, but his title, Son of God, as used among the Jews, had manifestly no allusion to the manner of the birth of Jesus. We have not the slightest reason to suppose them to have known any thing whatever of the miraculous conception. That they should have imagined the name to have any reference to such a fact, is altogether irreconcilable with the whole tenor of the New Testament on the subject. An illustration of this is seen in the confession of Nathanael. He knew nothing of Jesus, except that he was from Nazareth. Upon this fact, he predicates the inquiry, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But no sooner does our Saviour evince to this true Israelite his omniscience, by the declaration, "Before that Peter called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee," then he replies, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the king of Israel."—John i. 49. To say, that the miraculous conception was the ground of this profession of faith, is to trifle with the subject. All that Nathaniel knew of Christ was, that in him was incarnate Omniscience. So, this hypothesis is entirely inconsistent with the fact, that the Jews at large recognised this name as conveying an assertion of equality with God; and that the sense in which the title was claimed by Christ was such as, if false, involved him by their law in the charge of blasphemy. To say, that he used the word in another than the received sense, is, to accuse him of deceit; and involves the conclusion, that he died a martyr to falsehood, rather than a witness to the truth. To pretend that the council understood him, by that name, to mean no more than that he was miraculously born, is folly.





The most of these objections apply to the theory which supposes him to have become the Son of God by the resurrection; with this in addition:—It involves the falsehood of all his claims to this name; and of all the Father's testimonies to him, prior to his resurrection. He did not say to the Jews, "I will become the Son of God;" but, "I *am* the Son;" and the Father says, "This *is* my beloved Son." He was not condemned and crucified upon a charge so absurd,—that he declared that if killed, he would rise again; but because he said, "I am the Son of God;" making himself equal with God. However the relation arose, one thing is unquestionable:—that, alike by his own, the Baptist's, and the Father's testimony, he was the Son of God, from the beginning of his ministry.

We might appeal to that large class of scriptures, which use this, as the highest title they can apply to Him who "counted it not robbery to be equal with God." Paul can find no stronger terms, in which to describe the condescension and love of God, than, that he "hath spoken to us by his Son."—Heb. i. 2. Nor can he more strongly express the wickedness of those who reject Christ, than by saying that they "have trodden under foot the Son of God."—Heb. x. 29. In other places, the name is used as the peculiar and only proper designation of Christ, in his specific character, as God. Thus, it is in the baptismal service; wherein, if ever, are indicated the distinctive relations of the Three to each other as revealed for the faith and adoration of men. We might also point to the peculiar manner in which Jesus and his apostles use the title, "the Father," to designate the First Person of the Three. Upon these points we cannot dwell. There are, however, two or three additional arguments, which we may not omit to notice.

1. If these names do not constitute designations, intended to announce the First and Second Persons of the Trinity, as distinct subsistences of the Godhead, peculiarly related to each other,—then there are no such designations. That "there are Three that bear record in heaven," is unquestionable. That their relations to each other must be several and distinctive, is equally unquestionable.

§ 10. *General considerations.*

That the Holy One has revealed himself to man, in the use of a variety of names, each of which is appropriated to the illustration of some grand characteristic of the divine nature and its relations to man,—and that these names, taken together, serve to proclaim almost every important element in those characteristics,—every one knows, who knows any thing of his Bible. That the Third Person is made known by a name which is peculiar to him, and descriptive of his relations to the other Persons, is also incontrovertible. Is it, then, conceivable that the First and Second are left without names equally descriptive and peculiar to them, as subsisting in the Godhead and concurring in man's creation and redemption, each in his appropriate mode? Can this be possible, when these are they, as Christ declares, the knowledge of whom, in their several and united divinity, is eternal life? (John xvii. 3.)

2. Still more absurd appears such an assumption, when we find that the Scriptures do actually reveal the names of Father and Son; and appropriate them in such a way as precisely to fill all the conditions of the case here set forth. In baptism,—that most signal act of homage, in which the recovered members of a race apostate from God enter anew into his covenant, and consecrate themselves to him, as the object of their worship, and the author of their salvation, the Triune God,—the Persons of the Godhead are announced by the several names, "the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost." Thus is the distinctive name of the Third Person given; and with it are associated designations of the other Persons, which, thus occurring, we must conclude to be equally appropriate, equally descriptive and divine. This argument is yet further strengthened, by the fact that there is nothing revealed, concerning either the nature or the works of these blessed Persons, which does not find its normal relation to, and exposition in, these names, and the doctrine which they contain. Fully to unfold this argument, would be to write a volume. And our present treatise is designed to set forth, imperfectly, some of the great truths concerning God, in this very aspect. For the present, it is enough to suggest, that if eternal blessedness is attributed to these adorable Ones, it is



as the Son rejoices always before the Father and dwells in his bosom; whilst the Father delights in him, his beloved, his Son. If they are the Creator of all things, it is as the Father forms the plan, and commissions the Son, his appropriate agent, to perform the work. If the plan of salvation is unfolded, it is as the Father devises it, and sends the Son. And the Son, on the other hand, though essentially equal, yet thus relatively as Son subordinate, presents himself, saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will." In short, he who will examine with careful scrutiny the whole revelation, concerning the Persons and works of the Trinity, will discover that every thing has its solution in these names; and the entire scheme acquires congruity and beauty, as its elements cluster around the central truths which are involved in their use, and asserted in appropriate description of the things signified by them. In fact, the unavoidable alternative is, practically to ignore the fact of a specific relation between the Persons of the Godhead, and assume that all which is revealed to us respecting them is, that, in some sense, they are three, and, in some other sense, one; or, else, distinctly to recognise the reality and significance of the doctrine of the eternal generation. For, in the Scriptures, every thing which is said by way of particular revelation, on the subject of the divine plurality, is spoken in terms of this doctrine. Every thing tends to present it as one of the essential relations in which the unity, plurality and perfections of God have their solution, and shine forth to bless the creatures.

3. Our last argument the reader will be better prepared to appreciate, when the discussions of this volume are closed. We merely state it; to be kept in view, as we endeavour to unfold and contemplate the wondrous way of God with man. In the whole doctrine of the Bible concerning God and man, the names and the relations of father and son occupy a position of signal importance. However to be explained, they are used, as we have seen, in a most intimate relation to the nature of God himself and the creation of all things. In them, we have the terms of the problem respecting the ruin of our race,—Adam our father and his sons. In the plan of redemption, Christ appears

alternately, Son of man, bearing the curse,—Son of God, triumphing over Satan and death,—and father of a seed, who are redeemed by his blood. In the consummation of the work of grace, God proclaims himself our Father; and the full glory of that love and grace of God, which has embraced our world, culminates in the adoption of sons, and the privileges and inheritance thence resulting, on earth and forever in heaven. To us, these facts, which give the Scriptures all their lustre, and make the love and grace of God to shine in an ineffable light, are utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that the relations, paternal and filial, thus honoured, are relations merely human. Is it conceivable, that the glorious nature of God and Persons of the Godhead, the history of man, and the several steps in the scheme of God's eternal glory and man's unending bliss, all revolve as satellites around a relation purely human,—a relation limited to the earth, and destined to perish with the passing scenes of time? This seems especially absurd, when we remember the fact of man's destination to be the image and likeness of God; and the purpose of the whole work of God to be, the revelation and glory,—not of man, but of God. Of all this we shall see more hereafter.

§ 11. *Sum of the scriptural argument.*

Brown of Haddington compresses the scriptural evidence, as to the eternal generation, into a few brief paragraphs, which are here presented, as a recapitulation of the Bible argument.

"He is not the Son of God by his miraculous conception and birth. (1.) The Holy Ghost is never represented as his Father, nor could be, without admitting two fathers in the Godhead. That 'holy thing born' is called the Son of God, because his manhood subsisted in the person of the Son of God.—Luke i. 35. He had the character and relation of Son of God, long before his conception or birth.—Prov. xxx. 4; Psalm ii. 7; Gal. iv. 4; John iii. 16, 17. (2.) According to his human nature or flesh, he is the Son of man,—of Abraham, David,—and not the Son of God. (3.) His being 'made of a woman' was subsequent to his being the Son of God.—Romans viii. 3, 32; Gal. iv. 4. (4.) His extraordinary conception and birth could never render him 'the





only begotten Son of God,' as he is termed,—John i. 14, and iii. 16, 18; 1 John iv. 9; since Adam was his son by creation, and Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Samson, Samuel, and John Baptist, were procreated by extraordinary influence; tho' indeed very different from that which was exerted in the production of Christ's manhood.

"Nor is he called the Son of God, on account of God's raising him from the dead; for (1) He was the Son of God long before.—Matt. iii. 17, xvii. 5; John v. 16, 17, x. 30, 36; Mark xiv. 61, 62; Matt. xvi. 15, 16; John vi. 69, i. 49. (2) If his resurrection had rendered him the Son of God, he would have been his own father, as he raised himself.—John x. 17, 18, ii. 19. (3.) This could not have rendered him 'the only begotten Son of God;' as millions beside have or shall be raised from the dead.—Matt. xxvii. 52, 53; John v. 28, 29; 1 Thess. iv. 14, 16; Rev. xx. 12. Nor doth Acts xiii. 33 import that he became Son of God by his resurrection, but that his sonship was manifested by it, (compare Rom. i. 3, 4;) and that his resurrection publicly proved that the word of salvation, particularly that Psalm ii. 7, 8, was then exhibited, given, and fulfilled to men.

"Nor doth his mediatorial office constitute him the Son of God. (1.) A mission on an errand, or an appointment to service, cannot, in the nature of things, constitute sonship. (2.) His sonship is represented as prior to his commission to, or execution of, his mediatorial office.—John iii. 16; Gal. iv. 4; 1 John iv. 9, 10, iii. 8; Heb. v. 8. (3.) His divine sonship puts virtue into his mediatorial office; and so cannot depend on it.—Heb. iv. 14. (4.) His being 'from the Father' in respect to his sonship is expressly distinguished from his being 'sent' to execute his mediatorial office.—John vii. 29.

"But he is the Son of God by necessary and eternal generation;—that is, by such necessity, that the divine nature cannot at all exist without subsisting in him, in the form and relation of a Son to the First Person. (1.) In many texts of Scripture, he is simply called the Son of God, and in that character represented as the Most High God, the Lord God of his people, the Lord God, God the Saviour.—Luke i. 16, 17, 32, 35, 46, 47,—as

coming from heaven and above all,—John iii. 31; Matt. xi. 27, —and as the object of faith and worship,—John iii. 17, 36, ix. 35–38; Matt. iv. 33, xxvii. 54,—or as the same with God,—Heb. i. 8; 1 John iii. 8, with 1 Tim. iii. 16,—and as equal with his Father.—Matt. xxviii. 19; John v. 21. (2.) God hath given the most solemn and emphatic testimonies to his divine sonship.—Matt. iii. 17, xvii. 5. The first of these texts, literally translated, runs, 'This is that my Son, my beloved one, in whom I am well pleased.' And in the other, we are commanded to 'hear him,' as infinitely superior to Moses and Elias, his then visitants, who had been the most extraordinary of all the Old Testament prophets. . . . (3.) The Scriptures represent him as God's 'own Son,' his 'proper Son,' his 'Son of himself.'—John i. 14, 18, iii. 16, 18; Rom. viii. 3, 32; 1 John iv. 9, 12. If these expressions do not represent him as the Son by natural generation, what can do it? (4.) His being the Christ, Messiah, or Mediator is plainly distinguished from his being the Son of God.—John i. 49, vi. 69; Matt. xvi. 16; Heb. v. 8; 1 John iv. 14. (5.) When he was charged with blasphemy in making himself equal with God, by calling himself the Son of God, he plainly acquiesced in their interpretation of his words; and, instead of showing them that his claim of sonship to God, did not infer his claim of equality with God, he took occasion further to assert and demonstrate his supreme Godhead.—John v. 16–29, x. 30–36, xix. 7; Matt. xxvi. 63–65. Nay, perhaps, 'making himself equal with God,' John v. 18, are not the words of the persecuting Jews, but of the inspired evangelist. (6.) It was not from acts properly mediatorial, but from divine acts, that he was concluded to be the Son of God.—Matt. iv. 3, 6, xiv. 33, xxvii. 40, 54; John i. 49. (7.) If the title, Son of man, import his possession of a real manhood, his character, Son of God, God's proper Son, Son of himself, and only begotten Son of God, must certainly import his possession of the divine nature,—true and supreme Godhead. Now, if he be the Son of God, by nature, he must be his eternal Son, begotten from all eternity; for nothing that is not necessarily eternal in the highest sense, can be natural to God. Nor is there the least impropriety in God's calling his own eternity, 'this day,' as





an unsuccessful eternity is ever present.—Ps. ii. 7, with Isa. xlii. 13; Micah v. 2. Nor is the generation of his Son there represented as an event decreed, but as antecedent to, or fundamental of, God's grant of the Gentiles to him for his mediatorial inheritance.\*

The evidence at which we have glanced, abundantly establishes the position that the name, Father, is that by which the First Person of the Trinity is designated, in respect to his distinctive personality, in the unity of the Godhead;—that, reciprocal to this, the name, Son, is appropriated in like manner to the Second Person;—and, that the relation which they sustain to each other is appropriately described in terms of the phenomenon of begetting or generation. It is not questioned, by any who believe in the Trinity, that the name, Holy Spirit, is the distinctive title of the divine nature as subsisting in the Third Person of the Godhead. Thus we have the mystery of the blessed Trinity clearly set forth, to our apprehension and worship, in the names here considered; by the use of which, in the ordinance of baptism, we profess and seal our faith.

As to the meaning of these names and of the corresponding phraseology of Scripture, we can say but little. Man's darkened understanding only comes to any adequate sense of its own ruin, in the presence of the questions concerning the nature of that holy and glorious One, in whose likeness he was originally made; of whom he is now able to understand so little. And, although this is eternal life, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ his Son,—the knowledge enjoyed by the believer here, consists rather in an affectionate embrace, than in large intellectual conceptions respecting the nature of Him who is thus known. In heaven it will be otherwise:—"We shall see as we are seen, and know even as also we are known." Yet are there two or three points so plainly revealed, that it is our privilege to believe and assert them as truths; however dull our apprehensions, as to their meaning.

1. Such is the relation which the First and Second Persons

\* Brown's Natural and Revealed Religion, Book II. ch. ii. § 2.

sustain to each other, as to the manner of their subsistence, that the one infinite nature is communicated from the Father to the Son, in a generation, not voluntary, but of the very nature of the divine essence;—a generation which is not occasional, but continual; which does not originate, but is from everlasting and to everlasting; and in which, each of those blessed Persons possesses the whole infinite fulness of the divine essence, not jointly, but in common and undivided.\*

2. Whilst this wondrous generation of the Son does indicate a priority of the Father, in the order of subsistence and of operation,—yet is it so far from implying any essential or real inferiority in the Son, that it involves directly the reverse. A superficial view might suggest the idea that analogy is opposed to the equality of father and son. But in fact, even among men, the difference is merely one of order and precedence of action, dependent upon temporal relations, and reasons of social convenience. Essentially, they are equal; possessing the same nature, and endowed with the same attributes. The Jews, seeking to kill Jesus, "because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God,"—John v. 18, were correct in the conclusion which they derived from the language of Christ; and fully sustained by analogy, in coming to that conclusion.

3. As to the Holy Spirit, the mode of his subsistence is by a necessary and eternal communication of the same divine essence, which is in the Father and Son, not by generation, but by a spiration or breathing forth, from them; through which the Third Person has communion in the divine nature coequally with the First and Second. Here the remark, already made respecting the Son, is to be applied;—that the relation thus subsisting is one of essential equality; inasmuch as it involves the possession by each of the whole fulness of the one divine essence, in which each Person equally and wholly subsists.

\* "Ut omnis generatio dicat communicationem essentiam a parte gignentis genito, per quam genitus fiat similis gignenti, et eandem cum ipso naturam participet; ita generatio ista admirabilis recte exponitur per communicationem essentiam a Patre, per quam eandem cum illo essentiam Filius indivisibiliter possidet, et illi sit simillimus."—Turretin., Loc. III., Quæst. xxix. 4.



4. Not only are these Persons of the Godhead coequal, but coeternal. Although the phenomena of generation and spiration, as observed in men, intimate—as do all phenomena of creatures—finite origin and temporal succession, this suggestion is precluded in the cases here considered, by the fact that the phenomena are predicated of the very nature of God. And as every idea of beginning or change is incompatible with true conceptions respecting that nature, it follows, that the Three are equally and alike unoriginated and eternal,—a conclusion abundantly attested by the Scriptures.

5. From the whole doctrine here stated, it will be seen that it would be improper to speak of any one of the Persons as God, in contradistinction to the rest. Whilst each one is God, it is by a common and not a several divinity; by virtue of the common possession of the one undivided divine essence. It is objected that the assertion of three divine Persons is equivalent to saying that there are three Gods. But the objection is groundless. A person is a several subsistence, endowed with a moral nature. And although there be three several subsistences in the divine nature, and therefore three Persons, this is perfectly consistent with the unity of the Godhead; since the nature or essence in which these Three subsist is a unit. There is "one Lord, and his name one."—Zech. xiv. 9.

Should any object to the phraseology employed in this discussion; and insist that the various expressions used, such as, "communication," "begetting," "generation," "spiration," are expressive of finite and human relations; and, by the very force of the terms, involve the supposition that the relations so described are of a finite nature and temporal origin,—our reply is,—that if the nature of God were described in terms peculiar to it alone, the result would be to render the account utterly unintelligible;—that most of the objectionable expressions are the very words of the Scripture; and all of them abundantly authorized by scriptural usage;—and that, as we have sufficiently seen, the manner in which they are introduced, and the subjects to which they are applied, obviate any danger of misapprehension on the part of the candid and teachable. In fact,

there are very few words employed in the Bible, to designate divine perfections, which do not require to be understood in a sense different from that recognised in their application to other things. We are justified, by the usage of the sacred writers, in attributing thought, deliberation and decision, to God. Yet a moment's reflection must satisfy the intelligent reader, that it is as impossible for our finite capacities to conceive of these, divested of relation to time, as so to conceive of generation. The attempt is vain by searching to find out God.

The object of this discussion has been,—not so much a full exposition of the doctrine concerning the nature of God,—as, a notice of some of the aspects of that nature, which, commonly, are less insisted upon, and which sustain very important relations to the doctrines of the following pages.

The Three whom we have here seen, in revealed, yet mysterious relations to each other, are that one God whom we adore,—a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable: in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth; by whom all things were created, and for whose pleasure they are, and were created. Unto Him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.





## CHAPTER II.

## THE ETERNAL PLAN.

"His ways are everlasting."—HABBAKUK III. 6.

It would be extreme folly, or madness, were an individual to expend toil and money, in the construction of a vast and complicated piece of mechanism, without having fixed on any specific object to be accomplished by it.

The same charge would apply, if, having a purpose in view, he should proceed, without careful consideration so as to adapt his means to the proposed end; or should he devise a suitable plan and place it in the hands of the superintendent, whilst individual workmen are permitted to act independently of that plan, and to use such materials and work to such a model as may happen to suit their convenience or strike their fancy. In short, no intelligent person will bring his resources to task, without setting before himself some specific and suitable end; it is the part of a wise man, proposing to himself such an end, to devise a plan as perfect in all its parts as possible, and in its execution to use such materials, labourers and machinery, and such only, as are precisely suited to the end in view; and, to secure success, strict attention is as requisite to the minutest details as to the more extensive features. Not only so, but, where an enterprise has been undertaken, failure in any of its parts is proof either of ignorance or of want of forethought and deficiency of resources; as it is certain that he who has fully comprehended the obstacles which lie in his way, unless he is conscious of resources adequate to surmount them, will abandon the plan as sure to fail.

These principles are as applicable to the works of God, as to those of man. "Known unto God are all his works from the be-

ginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. If it is a characteristic of rational creatures that their acts are prompted by the expectation of attaining suitable ends, how much more must it be with Him whose understanding is infinite! The existence of the simplest piece of mechanism, the product of human labour, demonstrates the maker to have had an object in view. What then must be our conclusion, as we behold the creation of God; the heavens, the work of his fingers, the moon and the stars which he hath ordained, in all their astonishing structure and motions, our own bodies, so fearfully and wonderfully made, and the innumerable beings which fill and people earth and heaven! Can we believe that He, who in wisdom made them all, had no object in so doing? The Scriptures are unambiguous in their testimony on this subject. They declare the glory of the Creator to be the great end of all his works.

Let us for a moment forget that the teeming universe has existence, and contemplate that eternity where Jehovah dwelt from everlasting. When, in the council of the blessed Three, creation was decreed, where shall we look for the motive of this determination? Certainly not to the creatures which as yet have no existence. To operate as a motive, to exercise an influence, implies existence already possessed. But here, the very question is, whether such beings shall be called into existence. Plainly, the motive in such a case, must be sought, not in the possible creatures, who may, as the result, receive existence, but in the Being who is at once sole Existence and only Cause. Let it not, however, be imagined that this reason consisted in any need of the Creator; as though by this means he could acquire any new power, pleasure, or emolument. This would, in any aspect of the supposition, be the contradiction and absurdity of supposing the creature, which receives its existence and all that is in it from him, and which lives and moves in him, to have something which is not from its Creator, the acquisition of which may be profitable to him. But the very name which he proclaims rebukes the impious suggestion:—"I AM THAT I AM. . . . This is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all



generations."—Ex. iii. 14, 15. "I am that I am,"—the self-existent, self-poised, independent, unchangeable, eternal.

The sole reason of the creation was the mere good pleasure, the will, of the Creator. Hence the adoring song of the elders:

§ 2. *God's object was to reveal himself.*—"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and (*διὰ τὸ θέλημα σου*,) because of thy will they are, and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. Thus, originating in the

Creator's will, as its only cause, the creation has been by him destined to one great end, the revelation of God, the shedding abroad of his own glory. This is accomplished by the putting forth of such an agency and operation, as discovers the glory of the several Persons who coexist in the unity of the divine nature; and by the distinctive unfolding and exercise of the several attributes which go to make up the infinite perfection of God. In two ways is creation adapted thus to glorify God; as every creature is an object in which the divine attributes are revealed in exercise; and as intelligent creatures celebrate and adore the glory thus revealed; so, proclaiming it to each other.

That such was the design of the creation, is asserted in many scriptures. "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 36. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."—Rev. i. 8. "The heavens declare the glory of God."—Ps. xix. 1. "The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead."—Rom. i. 20. Of the wicked it is testified that "the Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. To Pharaoh, in his rebellion, God says, "In very deed for this cause have I raised thee up; for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."—Ex. ix. 16. From this language, Paul takes occasion to ask, "What, if God, willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?"—Rom. ix. 22. On the other

hand, the Lord says of the righteous, "Every one that is called by my name, I have created him for my glory."—Isa. xlii. 7. The apostle urges, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 20. If rendering glory to God be the best acknowledgment we can make to redeeming love, that must be the end to which we are made and redeemed. In accordance with this are the songs of heaven, of angels, and of the redeemed. "Glory to God in the highest!" is their strain, their hearts glowing with adoring raptures, and their lips exulting in the harmony of praise. "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."—Rev. v. 13. This general purpose of God to display his own glory does not exclude, but comprehends, as elements of it, those secondary ends which assume so much importance, in the estimation of the creatures; such as the exercise of his goodness, love, justice, faithfulness, mercy and truth. These, severally, are but the partial radiations of that glory which consists in the harmony and fulness of them all combined.

This purpose of God to reveal himself, implies much more than at first may be imagined. It involves the existence of intelligent creatures, capable of receiving such a revelation; as well as of instrumentalities through which it may be made. It further implies the revelation to the intelligences and apprehension by them of God, in the true beauty and glory of his nature as he really is. Not only must the light shine; but, as it shines, it must be seen in its true lustre as light. To suppose any thing else, is to imagine a failure in the attempted revelation. But there is no other conceivable spring of the highest happiness to the creatures, so full and unfailing as this,—to apprehend and appreciate, in their real excellence and glory, the perfections of God. The creature who does this, cannot but be blessed in the contemplation. It is no arbitrary dictum which is uttered by the Saviour, when he says, "This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. It is the necessary effect





of a realizing apprehension of the perfections which shine in the nature of God. Hence, this is the fountain to which, in the Scriptures, are traced all the joys of heaven itself. The inhabitants are blessed in the fact that they behold and celebrate the glory of God. Thus, then, we find involved, as an essential element in the great end proposed by God, infinite blessedness to the creatures, which he has thus seen good to identify with his own declarative glory.

Proposing such ends as we have thus shown, God in the beginning formed a perfect plan for the accomplishment of his purpose;—a plan, perfect in that it is precisely adapted to the end proposed; and perfect in the completeness of all the details, and adaptation of every minutest element of it to its distinctive office, and in the entire symmetry and harmony of the whole. In this fact we have the key to that name of Wisdom, which we have seen belongs to the Son of God; and to the style in which he speaks, in the book of Proverbs:—"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him."—Prov. viii. 22-30. Here, it is undoubtedly the Son of God who speaks. But it is he, as from everlasting he was present with the Father, in the characteristic exercise of infinite wisdom, concurring in a glorious scheme of creation, providence and redemption, of which he, in time, by that same name, appears as the sole glorious administrator, and at length, in his own incarnate person, the embodiment and consummation. In him the whole wisdom of God which shines in his other works, concentrates its scattered rays. "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens."—Prov. iii. 19. The testimony of Paul to the Ephesians is very clear and explicit on this subject. He says of the elect, that the Father hath chosen them in Christ, "before the foundation of

the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved; . . . having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 4-12. Here the apostle attributes all things to the divine will as their only reason and cause. The adoption is "according to the good pleasure of his will;" and the gospel is made known as "the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." He describes the whole dispensation of God's government, as designed "to the praise of his glory." He represents the plan of salvation, as one element in a scheme, in conformity with which the divine government in all its details is dispensed. God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." He speaks of "the dispensation of the fulness of times,"—the providential administration,—as the development of this original plan. Not only so, but the date of the whole design and plan is given,—"before the foundation of the world." Equally clear is the testimony of God, by Isaiah:—"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xli. 9, 10.

Designed, as was the plan, to reveal the perfections of God to creatures of limited capacities, the scheme was adapted to the purpose, by providing a system of gradually unfolding parts. He who could, in an instant, have finished his whole work, condescends to carry it forward step by step, in a process which at first presents the simplest truths, and from them proceeds to





those which are more profound. Thus, whilst no creature is ever able to exhaust or fully comprehend even the elementary principles, yet is any intelligent creature enabled to learn enough to constitute a fountain of eternal admiration, joy and happiness.

Here, it is not to be imagined that the Creator acted indeed upon a plan comprehending the larger masses and the leading events, but did not descend to the insignificant details, nor form a scheme of the little things. Every argument which proves any plan at all, demonstrates that plan to have comprehended the minutest details. The small dust of the balance is itself a distinct creation of God. It is endowed with certain properties, attractions, and impressibilities, adapting it to perform a specific part, and that, essential to the development and support of the larger features of the design. It follows, that, in giving it this precise constitution, the Creator designed it to accomplish these very purposes; or else that he made it so without a specific design, and the result is happy accident! The effects flowing from these little things have been, from the beginning, propagated until now; and will be till the end of time. This capacity to propagate influences, manifestly constitutes them means to the great end,—the display of God's glory; and involves the conclusion that to this end they were created. In short, the infinite One, in giving each atom existence, declares himself to have some end in view, worthy of God, and to which that atom is competent. Thus formed by his wisdom, and designed for his purposes, it cannot be beneath, or fail to enjoy, his constant care. In fact, the pretence that the atom or the insect is too insignificant to glorify its Creator, is alike unphilosophical and impious. Who can but realize emotions of adoring wonder, as he sees the tints which adorn the flowers of the field, painted by the same hand which gave the sun his splendour and the moon her majesty? What admiration fills the heart, which, having looked upon the heavens, the work of his finger, the moon and the stars which he has ordained, until oppressed with awe at the grandeur of the scene, finds the handiwork of the same glorious Being, in the

§ 4. It includes the minutest things.

tracery of inimitable beauty which the microscope reveals on the wing of the fly, or in the countless animalcules which people the leaf or swarm in the pool! What grandeur is imparted to our conceptions of the infinite One, as we learn that He who is not exalted by the creation of worlds, is not abased by painting the wing of the tiny insect, by dyeing and arranging the feathers of the butterfly, and shaping and adapting the organs of the worm!

If we pass from the natural to the moral universe, the question occurs, Where shall we find a really trivial event? A dewdrop falls on the surface of the placid stream, and subsides into the mass of waters; its fall unregarded, its existence unknown. Yet has it changed the level of the entire stream, and altered the relations of every particle in its channel. A cannon-ball drops from the deck of the gallant ship, and with sullen plunge seeks a bed among the sands beneath. But, as it sinks to rest, it has moved the vast ocean in its most obscure retreats. On the surface where it fell, a little circular wave is formed, which widens and expands, till it dies on the farthest shore. Could we follow its pathway, we should see its tide mingle with the storm-surge to sweep the seaman from the deck of the foundering bark, and murmur the requiem over his coral tomb;—we should see it combine with the waves that lash the cliffs of England, and swell the tide that pours along the shores of Asia; and the influences, originated by that casual wave, will be propagated to the end of time. So it is in the moral universe. No event is trivial, as it constitutes a link in the tremendous whole. Each little wave combines with the rest;—its living voice will be heard amid the throes of dissolving nature; and its waters will swell the tide which shall flow on the boundless shores of eternity. The caprices of an idiot, or the sportive follies of a child, may occupy such a place in the plan of God, as to control the destinies of nations, and enstamp their influence on the triumphant songs of heaven.

As to the particular features of the eternal plan, we have two sources of information,—the book of nature and providence, and the Scriptures. In the former, from beholding what God



has done, we learn what, from the beginning, he purposed to do. In his word, many of the mysteries of the plan, which nature could not have discovered, are unveiled; and the wondrous wisdom and glorious results of the whole are set forth. Here, the entire scheme concentrates its interest, and takes its form, from an eternal covenant, in which the Persons of the Godhead concurred together, in an ineffable harmony and unity, for the revelation of their glory, in the redemption of man. Of this covenant we shall see more hereafter. From it the whole system of the universe took its form. To its fulfilment the entire order of providence tends. In its execution, the Son of God becomes man; and in the final result, the children of corruption and dust become the princes of heaven,—co-regents with the eternal Son, in that kingdom which shall be for ever and ever; and co-heirs in his blessedness and in the riches and love of God,—shedding abroad, in all God's dominions, a knowledge of the glorious and invisible One, such as will forever fill heaven with adoring anthems of praise.

The first step in the fulfilment of this plan, was the creation of the angelic hosts, and of the material universe. The ministering intelligences of heaven would seem to have been first called into being; exalted, happy and adoring witnesses of all the rest. This appears to be implied in the language of God to Job:—"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"—Job xxxviii. 4, 6, 7. Why those songs of harmony? Why that exulting joy to which those bright spirits thus gave utterance? They beheld spread before them, in the volume of creation, a revelation of the immensity and glory the power and Godhead of Him in whom they have their being. As they behold the unfolding of a perfect plan, which comprehends in harmonious relations innumerable parts, they recognise the evidence of the unity and wisdom of God. His goodness shines before them in the happiness of the creatures to which every thing tends. And when they observe the vastness of some parts, the minuteness of

others, and the completeness of the whole, they are overwhelmed with the immensity, and the inexhaustible power and resources, of the Creator. How august the spectacle!—how magnificent the revelation thus unfolded to their wondering gaze! Even to our faint vision and feeble powers, what a scene does the creation display! what a story does it tell, of the matchless perfections of the Creator! Whilst the heavens proclaim his glory, and the vast systems of the universe declare his power and Godhead, the least and lowliest thing which his hand has made points its tiny finger aloft, and concurs with the rest to direct our thoughts in adoration to God its Maker.

"There's not a tint that paints the rose,  
Or decks the lily fair,  
Or marks the humblest flower that blows,  
But God has placed it there.  
There's not of grass a single blade,  
Or leaf of loveliest green,  
Where heavenly skill is not displayed,  
And heavenly wisdom seen."—HEBER.

To the instructed ear the universe is full of voices, telling each its own story, of the power, the wisdom and the goodness of Him by whom are all things. To the intelligent heart, which is attuned to such harmonies, nature is one grand instrument of many chords, which pours continually forth sublimest anthems burdened with his praise. From the shrill soprano of the insect's evening hum, and the soft chorals of the twittering swallow or the soaring lark, to the deep thunder's reverberating peal, the sighing murmur which forever breathes from the heaving bosom of the ocean, and the mighty bass of the earthquake's labouring moan,—every sound which greets the ear is another note in the harmonious measures of adoring song. And when, amid the descending shadows of evening, the voices of nature are hushed, and the tranquil stillness invites to contemplation or repose, even SILENCE herself takes up the strain, and the starry hosts unite in the general chorus of unending praise.

What a pageant of grandeur and beauty do the heavens reveal, as earth sinks to rest beneath the curtains of night! "Lift up





your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth."—Isa. xl. 26. Behold them coming forth from the chambers of God, and in silent grandeur, a countless host, pursuing their mighty march across the firmament. So far from us is the nearest sentinel that twinkles there, that the ray of light which meets our vision, although speeding a flight of twelve millions of miles a minute, has worn out nearly ten years in winning its way to earth; and the multitudes of silvery beams which are barely perceptible to the naked eye, have travelled an hundred and twenty years to pass the vast expanse which lies between. Yet, scattered, as they probably are, as far from each other as from us, such is their multitude, that the astronomer, with his telescope directed immovably to a single point, has seen one hundred and sixteen thousand stars pass over his field of vision in a quarter of an hour. What, then, must be the extent of the vast cluster which is spread before us; and what the multitudes of stars of which it consists! Each one of them is a sister sun to that which sheds its daily radiance on our earth; and as that is surrounded by its retinue of planets and satellites and cometary legions, so probably are they all. As you contemplate these things, struggling to form some conception of the vast expanse, across whose diameter a ray of light toils on for two thousand years, before it gains the other bound, do you imagine that you have caught a glimpse of the extent of the creation and dominions of God? Listen to the testimony of Job:—"By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent (the milky way?). Lo! these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him!"—Job xxvi. 13, 14. By the help of the telescope, look forth beyond those myriad stars which constitute this our universe, so incomprehensibly vast, and you will learn that these all are but one little group,—an islet in the ocean of immensity, which Jehovah has stretched out. Away upon that vast sea are strewn, here and there, as stars are scattered in our heavens, multitudes of other clusters, such as this; each one, in its millions of suns,

a separate universe, divided from each other and from the hosts of our heavens, by an immensity, from whose breadth recoiling imagination reels back upon its own nothingness. The astronomer, confident in the result of the severest mathematical deductions, assures us that the ray of light which falls upon his glass, has been a million of ages flashing its trackless way, since it left those luminaries, of whose existence it is the herald. And yet, even here, we find no bound. Still, as new skill gives new power to the telescope, and enables our vision to plunge deeper and deeper into that widening immensity, we discover, in the farthest distance, the dim signals of yet other clustered myriads; coming up to view. Still,—as the instrument sweeps the concave, to the north, and the south, the east, and the west, above, below, and all around,—still must we exclaim, with Job, "Lo! these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him!" and we fall back upon the conclusion, that the works of God are an illimitable abyss,—an ocean without bottom or bound. As we gaze upon this wondrous scene,—this heaven, each constellation of which is a universe, a heaven of its own,—we behold a new and transcendently glorious interpretation of the apostrophe of Solomon:—"Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee!"—2 Chron. vi. 18.

Stooping from such contemplations as these, we see at our feet the handiwork of the same glorious Being who made them all, in the tints that adorn the blushing rose, and the plumage of the insect that floats in the sunbeam. Nor are these little things less worthy of his creative skill and watchful care, than those orbs and systems of order and light. For all are alike unworthy to compare with his majesty. His creative energy is not wearied by the vastness of those; nor is he fatigued by the minuteness of detail which, with them, embraces in a glance all the littleness and variety of these. All that we thus contemplate,—the earth, with its inhabitants, the little and the great,—the sun, with its encircling train,—the radiant throng of the milky way,—the teeming clusters, of which we catch a glimpse in the far-off boundless expanse,—all, all are the unlaboured creations of the One Infinite. Without an exertion they exist;



born of the tranquil energy of his will. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."—Ps. xxxiii. 9. Yet, whilst thus immensity teems with the creations of his power, the revelations of his glory, he, the Creator, dwells alone; unexhausted, uncommunicated, unapproached and unapproachable. Present always and everywhere, but hidden in his very infinitude, he remains the uncomprehended God; and, with Job, the loftiest of the witnessing seraphim may exclaim, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."—Job xxiii. 8, 9.

"In its sublime research, philosophy  
May measure out the ocean deep,—may count  
The sands, or the sun's rays; but, God! for thee  
There is no weight nor measure; none can mount  
Up to thy mysteries. Reason's brightest spark,  
Though kindled by thy light, in vain would try  
To trace thy counsels infinite and dark;  
And thought is lost, ere thought can soar so high;  
Even like past moments in eternity."—DEREHAVIN.

Thus glorious is the knowledge of God, which shines on the very face of the material system. Yet falls it utterly short of the revelation, for which the eternal plan provided. § 6. The moral revelation. The voices, in which the heavens and all nature tell the glory of the Creator, speak only of the eternal power and Godhead of the one infinite Spirit. In the further chapters of the plan, provision is made for revealing God, the triune, the holy, the just and true, the God of compassion, mercy and love;—for shedding forth the higher mysteries of the moral nature of that majestic One whom heaven, even the heaven of heavens, cannot contain.

Of this moral revelation, the first element consists of the holy law. This, transcribed from the perfections of God's moral nature, constitutes an exhibition of them, as well as a rule by which the moral intelligences may live in the likeness of God. This law was first made known to the angelic hosts,

by inscription on their hearts at their creation; as the first chapter in the knowledge of God, and the rule for their guidance. But in this volume it will be discussed, as given to man and illustrated in his history. It constitutes a fundamental and perpetual element of the entire revelation, for which the plan provided. That plan is carried on to completion in the whole providential administration of God; especially as exercised towards Adam and his race, and the second Adam and his seed.

Here, the peculiar character of the stage selected for this greatest display of the perfections of the Most High, this consummate revelation of the inmost nature of God, is worthy of distinct notice. Had a council of the cherubim been called, and the question proposed to them,—What part of the universe will be the most suitable platform on which to display the highest glories of God?—they doubtless would have selected some mighty sun, some central luminary, around which a vast universe revolves. They would have sought among the high places of the creation for a suitable stage on which to exhibit the high themes of moral grandeur and grace, on which the intelligent universe was about to gaze, in wondering admiration and eternal joy and praise. But such was not the wisdom of God. Indifferent to all greatness of material dimension, he selected, as the throne of his moral glory and the inner place of his eternal worship, the earth,—one of the smaller planets that attend upon the sun; which is itself a satellite sweeping through the fields of space around some far-off greater centre of our material system. Thus has the glorious Creator proclaimed, in the most unambiguous terms, that, although he condescends to reveal the immensity of his power and illimitable resources to the narrow conceptions of creatures, by material dimensions in his works which must amaze and overwhelm the capacities of all finite intelligences, yet are they all at last utter nothings to him. Our globe is as great, in comparison with his infinitude, as the mightiest sun or grandest system which the universe contains; and our earth-born race, as the countless throng of mighty seraphim. All are but nothing before him.





For the revelation of the moral perfections of God, this earth was designated, and man ordained. And because of this their destined office, the Wisdom of God, from everlasting, rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and delighted in the sons of men. Of the council of the Triune God, at which man's creation was decreed, we have an authentic record:—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion." Thus was man set apart to be, in the presence of the hosts of earth and heaven, an image and likeness of his Triune Creator. Therefore was he clothed in knowledge, righteousness and holiness; therefore endowed with a nature, in which the parental and filial relations shadow faintly forth the ineffable relations of the eternal Father and his coeternal Son; and in which the vital breath that flows from his lungs is a like distant image of the mysterious relation to them of the Holy Spirit. For the same reason was he crowned with a dominion, the first sphere of which was this low earth and the animal creation; and the final extent of which will be the whole universe of God,—a dominion first possessed by Adam, in Eden, and by his sons according to the flesh; but at length, and forever, enjoyed by the second Adam and his sons, in the restored paradise of God. "Unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him; but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."—Heb. ii. 5-9. The fact that the dominion, which was bestowed on man in his creation, finds its consummation in the exaltation of the Son of man, on whose head are many crowns, and to whom angels and principalities and powers are subject, is conclusive proof, that man

§ 7. *Earth the theatre of the revelation.*

in his creation was designed to be the image of God, not to the creatures of earth merely, but to the whole universe of God; and every feature of his nature, and every aspect of his position, is to be contemplated in the light of this fact, in order to be rightly understood. Indeed, what Paul says of the great mystery of godliness, "God manifested in the flesh, seen of angels," although it has immediate respect to the person and work of the man Christ Jesus in the days of his flesh, may well be understood in a much wider sense. That mystery began to unfold itself as a revelation, in the person of Adam, who was made in the image and likeness of God. It shines forth with an unspeakable lustre, in the second Adam, at once the Son of man, and the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and express image of his person. Still further does the revelation expand, and the glory increase, in the generation and growth of that mystical body, which consists of Christ, the Head, and the church, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all," the body; each member of which is renewed in the likeness of Christ in the image of the Father, and pervaded with the Spirit of Christ and of God. Each one is thus constituted a star, to shine in the light of the one glorious Sun; thus shedding forth, and disseminating to every creature, the unutterable wonders of the glory and grace of God; and "the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," (Eph. iv. 16,) is the blessed and beloved bride, the Lamb's wife, in whose beauties Jehovah delights, and whose espousals constitute the climax of the whole display of wisdom and power, holiness and love,—the completed revelation of a glorious God.

The eternal plan, which thus concentrates its light in man, and pours it abroad through the medium of his person and history, is at once progressive in its course, and cumulative in its revelations. Like some vast cathedral whose numerous parts,—its buttresses and columns, its windows and arches, porticos, towers and spires,—as by degrees they are reared, reveal each a symmetry and beauty of its own; and which, as they grow to completion, gra-

§ 8. *The revelation is progressive and cumulative.*





dually discover the unity of all in one design, and all contribute to its majestic beauty,—so is it here. In the administration of the plan, whilst each new development transcends all which have gone before, it does not supersede, but comprehends them. The revealing office of Adam is not annulled, as a failure through the fall, by the entrance of Christ; nor does the covenant of grace abrogate that which was made with Adam in his creation. But the creation, the law, Adam and his race, and God's dealings with him, and with them in him, and Christ and his people, and God's dealings with them, individually and as a body,—these are the elements of the revelation; each one fulfilling its several office, and all combining their light in the person and work of the Son of God. Thus is he the Alpha and Omega, "Christ all and in all," to whom all creation points; by whom the Father is made known; and in whom, thus, the design of the whole work of creation and providence is consummate and discovered, for the adoration of the universe and the infinite blessedness of man.

We have seen the grand object which was contemplated in the eternal plan to have been the revelation of God; and that those enumerated were the instrumentalities which were devised and ordained to that end. In fact, beside these, God has given no other. It follows, that no true science of theology is attainable, except in the study of the book thus spread open before us, in the order in which it is given, and in the light of the fact that such was its design. He who fails to recognise and appreciate the intention of the whole system as one vast revelation, of which each several being and event utters its own particular testimony—a testimony to which it was specifically ordained,—must, of necessity, fail of a full apprehension of the things revealed.

Whilst the great end had in view was the revelation of God, the grand instrumentality employed is the salvation of man. The first chapters of the narrative discover Adam self-destroyed, apostate and accursed, helpless and hopeless, awaiting the descending stroke of wrath. But light from heaven shines on his ruin, and the wisdom and love of God undertake his rescue. A scene radiant in the light of all matchless perfections, shines

before us as we read the pages of God's redeeming grace. And when the mystery of God is finished, and the revelation complete, the last chapters exhibit the children of Adam become sons of God, and the heirs of the curse become possessors of heaven and princes there, arrayed in the glory of God's perfect likeness, and blessed forever in his loving smile. If all the sons of God shouted for joy when they caught the first glimpse of his glory as it shone in the creation, with what shoutings will the topstone be brought home! How will heaven resound with the anthem of praise!—"Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."



## CHAPTER III.

### THE PROVIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION.

THE plan which was formed in the councils of eternity, is accomplished, in time, by the administration of the providential government. This government is conducted in a twofold agency; partly through the instrumentality of natural laws and second causes, and partly by the immediate hand of God. In respect to second causes, several different theories have obtained more or less currency. Some deny them any efficiency whatever, and make the laws of nature to be nothing but the uniform modes of divine operation; so that God is not only the first but the only cause. The opposite extreme is held by others, who look upon the universe as a machine, from the natural operation of which all things take place, without the interposition of the Creator, who continues forever an inactive spectator of the fated process. According to another opinion, the powers of nature are ordinarily left to their own operation; but on special occasions the Creator interposes, as in miracles. A fourth, and the scriptural doctrine, is, that whilst the creatures are endowed with a real efficiency and true causation, they are at the same time under the constant and universal control of God;—that he, “the Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures, actions and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness and mercy.”\*

Substances and their phenomena constitute the whole sum of

things that are. A substance is an existence which is invested with certain properties or forces. In other words, it is an efficient cause, of which the phenomena which attach to it are the effects. The word, substance, designates the being or existence of which those forces are predicated; and, cause, the forces in exercise,—the substance in action. The possession of forces is essential to the very existence of a substance; and they are thus essential, not as sustaining an outside relation to it; but they reside in the very substance itself, as elements without which its existence is not conceivable. The forces thus residing in substances are derived originally from God, sustained each instant by his power, and controlled by his sovereign will. Yet have they a real existence, which is distinct from the omnipotence of God; and an activity which is their own, and not the agency of the Creator. These forces give to each several substance its peculiar character, and constitute each a machine, so to speak,—a motive power, adapted to perform given functions, to occupy a specific place and hold specific relations to others. This remark holds good alike in regard to animate and inanimate nature, the minute and the great. An atom is endowed with gravitation as certainly as the earth or the sun. It is also characterized by other affinities or attractions, with kindred repulsions; the effect of which is, that it refuses to combine with certain substances, and in certain relations, and, on the contrary, seeks combination in different relations, and with other bodies. The elements constituting a mass of fuel, which at an ordinary temperature adhere with the tenacity of hickory or the hardness of anthracite, when subjected to the influence of heat, so repel each other as to dissolve the entire mass. Thus are all material substances composed of particles, held together by mutual attractions, resulting in every variety of texture and every degree of solidity, from the rarity of the gases to the density of gold. An example of the fact of which we speak occurs in the assimilation of food. An ox feeds on grass or corn. The mass of food is thrown into the stomach, and that living machine, with its auxiliary organs, rejecting what is unsuitable, separates

\* Westminster Confession, chap. v. § 1.





the rest, and re-combines it in the necessary forms, conveying, as may be necessary, the requisite elements, and elaborating them into horns to arm the head, or hoofs to protect the feet. To other parts, as required, are borne the elements of bone, and combined in the ivory texture of the teeth, or the porous and yielding structure of the ribs. Nutriment is thus ministered to every part, and elaborated into flesh and sinew, horn and hair, or scales; constituting in some animals a covering firm as steel, in others, soft as silk. It thus appears that the animal organization exerts a force to lay hold of the food when deposited in the stomach, and apply the requisite elements to the nutrition of the body; and that the elementary atoms have natures susceptible to the influences thus exerted, and endowed with attractions to hold them in proper combination in the animal frame.

Illustrations to the same effect might be multiplied without limit.\* What has been presented is sufficient to justify the statement already made,—that each material substance is a motive power, endowed with a capacity of putting forth and propagating influences and forces upon others; and, in like manner, susceptible to influences propagated from them. The only knowledge we can have of any substance is in the form of a list of the attributes of efficiency possessed by it. Let the reader test this suggestion upon any substance,—a book, for example. It has length, breadth and thickness,—that is, it exerts resistance to pressure in three directions; it throws off the coloured rays of light in a manner which makes a specific impression on the organs of vision, which we express by saying that it is visible and of a given colour; it tends towards the earth by a mutual attraction, which we indicate by ascribing to it weight. Thus, we would know absolutely nothing of the existence of any substance but for the forces it develops, the influences it exerts, the effects it produces; and, of the substances which are thus discovered to us, our acquaintance is strictly limited to a knowledge of those attributes of efficiency which constitute them causes,—that is to say,—sources of propagated effects.

The theory of Edwards, on the subject of second causes, constitutes a most important and controlling feature in his system of doctrine. He denies the creatures to be endowed with any properly causative forces; and attributes all effects to God, as the immediate and only cause.

This theory is fully stated in his treatise on Original Sin. An English writer, in the controversy with Taylor of Norwich, had spoken of human depravity as a natural consequence and effect of Adam's first sin. Upon this, Taylor says, "Here R. R. supposes the course of nature to be a proper active cause, which will work and go on by itself without God, if he lets or permits it; whereas the course of nature, separate from the agency of God, is no cause, or nothing. If he shall say, 'But God first sets it to work, and then it goes on by itself,' I answer,—that the course of nature should continue itself, or go on to operate by itself, any more than at first produce itself, is absolutely impossible. But suppose it goes on by itself, can it stop itself? Can it work any otherwise than it doth? Can the course of nature cease to generate? Or can it produce a holy instead of a sinful nature, if it pleases? No advocate of original sin will affirm this. Therefore, if it is a cause, it is a passive cause, which cannot stop, or avoid producing its effects. And if God sets it to work, and it cannot cease working, nor avoid producing its effects till God stops it, then all its effects in a moral account however must be assigned to him who first set it to work. And so our sinfulness will be chargeable upon God."\*

The position thus asserted by Taylor,—that God is the only cause,—Edwards adopts and vindicates with great zeal. Respecting the propagation of depravity, he says, "'Tis true that God by his own almighty power creates the soul of the infant; and 'tis also true, as Dr. Taylor often insists, that God, by his immediate power, forms and fashions the body of the infant in the womb; yet he does both according to that course of nature which he has been pleased to establish. The course of nature is demonstrated, by late improvements in philosophy, to be indeed what our author himself says it is, viz., nothing but the esta-

\* Taylor on Original Sin, suppl. sec. vii.



blished order and operation of the Author of nature.\* And though there be the immediate agency of God in bringing the soul into existence in generation, yet it is done according to the method and order established by the Author of nature, as much as his producing the bud or the acorn of the oak. . . . 'Tis as much agreeable to an established course and order of nature, that since Adam, the head of the race of mankind, the root of that great tree with many branches springing from it, was deprived of original righteousness, the branches should come forth without it. Or, if any dislike the word *nature* as used in this last case, and instead of it choose to call it a *constitution* or *established order* of successive events, the alteration of the name won't in the least alter the state of the present argument. Where the name *nature* is allowed without dispute, no more is meant than that established method and order of events, settled and limited by divine wisdom." Again he says, "If here it should be said that God is not the author of sin in giving men up to sin, who have already made themselves sinful; because, when men have once made themselves sinful, their continuing so, and sin's prevailing in them, and becoming more and more habitual, will follow in a course of nature: I answer, let that be remembered, which this writer so greatly urges, in opposition to them that suppose original corruption comes in a course of nature, viz., 'that the course of nature is nothing without God.' He utterly rejects the notion of the course of nature's being a proper active cause, which will work and go on by itself, without God, if he lets or permits it; but affirms that the course of nature separate from the agency of God is no cause, or nothing; and that the course of nature should continue itself, or go on to operate by

\* "Late improvements in philosophy." Says a historian of modern philosophy, "The tendency of Cartesianism from the very first was to place in undue prominence the idea of the infinite or absolute, and to cast proportionally into the shade those of finite nature and finite self. Malebranche went so far as to deny secondary causes altogether, thus confining all real activity to the Supreme Being; while Spinoza completely absorbed all finite existence in the infinite, and made every thing that is, but a part and a modification of the one unchangeable substance."—*Morell's History of Modern Philosophy*, p. 147.

itself, any more than at first produce itself, is absolutely impossible."\* Taylor's design, in these places which Edwards quotes, was to deny such a causative relation between parent and child as could convey corruption to the latter. The premises thus stated by Taylor, Edwards accepts; and only avoids his conclusions, by taking the position, that God can, by a "constitution," make things to be true which in themselves are not true.

The same view, in regard to creature causation, is essentially involved in Edwards' doctrine of identity. On this subject, he

§ 4. Edwards' doctrine of identity.

undertakes to show that no real oneness is possible in things which exist in different time and place. The moon, for example, which now is, has no identity with that which existed one moment since, or with that which shall be the next instant. Each is a new and distinct creation, and identical in no sense, except that God has in sovereignty determined them to be accounted one. The cause of the continued existence of every created substance must be one of these: "either the antecedent existence of the same substance, or else the power of the Creator. But it can't be the antecedent existence of the same substance. For instance, the existence of the body of the moon at this present moment can't be the effect of its existence at the last foregoing moment. For, not only was what existed the last moment no active cause, but wholly a passive thing; but this also is to be considered,—that no cause can produce effects in a time and place in which itself is not. 'Tis plain, nothing can exert itself or operate when and where it is not existing. But the moon's past existence was neither where nor when its present existence is. . . . Therefore the existence of created substances in each successive moment must be the effect of the immediate agency, will and power of God." He then supposes the objection that the established course of nature can continue existence when once given, and replies that the course of nature is nothing separate from God, and that, "as Dr. Taylor says, 'God, the original of all being, is the only cause of all natural effects.' A father, according to the course of nature, begets a child; an oak,

\* Edwards on Original Sin, iv. 2.





according to the course of nature, produces an acorn or a bud: so, according to the course of nature, the former existence of the trunk of the tree is followed by its new or present existence. In the one case and the other, the new effect is consequent on the former only by the established laws and settled course of nature, which is allowed to be nothing but the continued, immediate efficiency of God, according to a constitution that he has been pleased to establish. Therefore, as our author (Taylor) greatly urges, that the child and the acorn, which come into existence, according to the course of nature, in consequence of the prior existence and state of the parent and the oak, are truly immediately created or made by God; so must the existence of each created person and thing, at each moment of it, be from the immediate continued creation of God. It will certainly follow from these things that God's preserving created things in being is perfectly equivalent to a continued creation, or to his creating those things out of nothing at each moment of their existence." He therefore insists "that God's upholding created substance, or causing its existence in each successive moment, is altogether equivalent to an immediate production out of nothing at each moment. . . . God produces the effect as much from nothing as if there had been nothing before. So that this effect differs not at all from the first creation, but only circumstantially; as in first creation there had been no such act and effect of God's power before; whereas his giving existence afterwards, follows preceding acts and effects of the same kind in an established order. Now, in the next place, let us see how the consequence of these things is to my present purpose. If the existence of created substance in each successive moment be wholly the effect of God's immediate power in that moment, without any dependence on prior existence, as much as the first creation out of nothing, then, what exists at this moment by this power, is a new effect; and, simply and absolutely considered, not the same with any past existence, though it be like it, and follows it according to a certain established method. And there is no identity or oneness in the case, but what depends on the arbitrary constitution of the Creator, who, by his

wise sovereign establishment, so unites these successive new effects, that he treats them as one, by communicating to them like properties, relations and circumstances, and so leads us to regard and treat them as one. When I call this an arbitrary constitution, I mean, that it is a constitution which depends on nothing but the divine will; which divine will depends on nothing but the divine wisdom. In this sense, the whole course of nature, with all that belongs to it, all its laws, and methods, and constancy, and regularity, continuance and proceeding, is an arbitrary constitution. For it don't at all necessarily follow, that because there was sound, or light, or colour, or resistance, or gravity, or thought, or consciousness, or any other dependent thing, the last moment, that therefore there shall be the like at the next. All dependent existence whatsoever is in a constant flux; ever passing and returning; renewed every moment, as the colours of bodies are every moment renewed by the light that shines upon them; and all is constantly proceeding from God, as light from the sun. 'In him we live, and move, and have our being.' Thus it appears, if we consider matters strictly, there is no such thing as any identity or oneness in created objects, existing at different times, but what depends on God's sovereign constitution. And so it appears, that objection we are upon, made against a supposed divine constitution, whereby Adam and his posterity are viewed and treated as one, in the manner and for the purposes supposed, as if it were not consistent with truth, because no constitution can make those to be one which are not one,—I say, it appears that this objection is built on a false hypothesis; for it appears that a divine constitution is the thing which makes truth, in affairs of this nature."\* To render his meaning still more clear and explicit, he illustrates it in a marginal note. The rays of the sun falling on the moon, and reflected from it, are none of them the same for two consecutive moments. "Therefore the brightness or lucid whiteness of this body is no more, numerically, the same thing with that which existed in the preceding moment, than the sound of the wind that blows now is individually the same

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\* Ibid. part iv. ch. 8.





with the sound of the wind that blew just before. . . . And if it be thus with the brightness or colour of the moon, so it must be with its solidity, and every thing else belonging to its substance, if all be, each moment, as much the immediate effect of a new exertion or application of power. The matter may perhaps be, in some respects, still more clearly illustrated by this:—the images of things in a glass. . . . The image, constantly renewed by new, successive rays, is no more, numerically, the same, than if it were by some artist put on anew with a pencil, and the colours constantly vanishing as fast as put on. . . . And, truly, so the matter must be with the bodies themselves, as well as their images. They also cannot be the same, with an absolute identity, but must be wholly renewed every moment, if the case be, as has been proved, that their present existence is not, strictly speaking, at all the effect of their past existence, but is wholly, every instant, the effect of a new agency or exertion of the power of the cause of their existence. If so, the existence caused is every instant a new effect, whether the cause be light, or immediate divine power, or whatever it be."

Now, if all this be true,—if the creature that now is, instantly vanishes, to give place to another equally evanescent,—it is evident that there is no room for the exertion of any force by the substance thus so transient. It and all cotemporaneous substances are annihilated at the same instant, and give place to others, which, as they are immediate productions of creative power, must receive all their primary impressions, and realize their first impulses, from the creative energy. And these alone they ever feel; for with the first instant of existence—they are gone, and others fill their place. The position is formally stated, as unquestionable and fundamental, "that no cause can produce effects in a time and place in which itself is not." "Nothing can exert itself or operate when and where it is not existing;" an axiom which, in whatever sense true, is certainly false in that intended; since it is here expressly designed to separate all present created existences and their phenomena from any efficient relation whatever, either to their antecedents or succes-

sors. In fact, the axiom, as here employed, is contradictory to any conceivable exercise of power by a creature. The very idea of power in exercise is that of an energy put forth of the substance from which it springs, and perpetuated after the cessation of the impulse in which it originated.

The conclusion to which the whole argument of Edwards is directed, renders his meaning yet more unquestionable. He is combating the objection, that the imputation of Adam's sin goes upon the false supposition that he and we are one. He replies, that "the objection supposes there is a oneness in created beings, whence qualities and relations are derived down from past existence, distinct from, and prior to, any oneness that can be supposed to be founded on divine constitution; which is demonstrably false; and therefore the objection wholly falls to the ground." That is, since a given existence,—a man or a tree,—"simply and absolutely considered, is not the same with any past existence, though it be like it, and follows it according to a certain established method," and its identity through successive moments of time is constituted by the mere sovereign establishment of God,—it follows, that the same authority can decree us to be one with Adam; and such decree shall constitute this the truth, and make us really one with him.

Here it is necessary to notice distinctly the peculiar sense in which the word, constitution, is employed by Edwards and his disciples. By it he does not mean, as might be supposed, a system of fundamental principles, adopted by the Creator at the beginning, in accordance with which to make and endow the creatures; but an act of executive sovereignty, in the order of nature subsequent to creation, and in which he is supposed, by decree, to constitute or determine the creatures to be something else than essentially and creatively they were. Thus, the colour of the moon, its solidity, and every thing else belonging to its substance is at each moment a new and immediate effect of creative power, and "differs not at all from the first creation, but only circumstantially; as in first creation there had been no such act and effect of God's power before; whereas, his giving existence afterwards follows preceding acts and effects of the



same kind in an established order." By a sovereign act of God, these things, thus created different and distinct, are decreed to be one. This decree is what Edwards calls, a constitution; and is, he says, "the thing which makes truth in affairs of this sort."

No doubt, many expressions may be found in the writings of Edwards, which are entirely inconsistent with the theory here exhibited,—a theory irreconcilable with doctrines which he held with an unwavering faith. Inconsistency is the characteristic of error. And we are persuaded that a careful examination of his works must convince any candid mind, that the opinions set forth in the above quotations were characteristic of his entire philosophy, and very influential in modifying his theological system.

The scheme has an air of piety, by which Edwards was betrayed. It seems to honour God, by making things dependent

on him in the most absolute and intimate manner. It, in reality, dishonours him, denying his power, his truth and his holiness. It limits his power, by assuming that he cannot create a substance endowed with true perpetuated forces. So that the doctrine is irreconcilable with the real existence of creation at all. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." What is meant by this statement? It attests the creation, "in the beginning," of the heavens and earth which now are. It asserts the production of substances, of given form, and other specific attributes. These attributes are forces, which we intuitively attribute to the substances. Such is the constitution of our minds, such the impress stamped upon them by the Creator, that we universally, necessarily and immediately refer the effects which attach to a substance, to powers which we attribute to it, as of its essence, constituting it the efficient cause of those effects. But, when we attempt to describe the heavens and earth, and in so doing enumerate these powers or properties, we are told in respect to each, "It is nothing but a continued immediate efficiency of God, according to a constitution that he has been pleased to establish." By the time the description and the application of this principle

is completed, the creation has vanished;—there remains nothing but the power of God, putting into operation—"I speak as a man"—a series of phantasmagoria, for the deception of the observer! Nay, the principle follows us still further. If its evidence is adequate to set aside all our intuitive apprehensions, so as even to overthrow the testimony of consciousness to our real existence and identity, through the successive moments of life, there is no reason that can be assigned, why we should rely on the witness of that same consciousness, to the reality of our present existence. If all effects be referred to God, as sole and immediate cause, so must the self-consciousness which we realize; and, before we are aware, the conscious soul is robbed of existence, the universe is blotted out, and nothing remains, after the juggle has wrought, but God and the phenomena of his existence. His word testifies that he has formed a creation. It declares that he has given to his creatures powers to be exercised by them,—to his intelligent creatures, powers, for the right use of which they must account to him. We are assured, that, having finished the creation, God rests from all his works. The indelible conviction of the potentiality of our own nature, and that of all the creatures, is enstamped by the hand of God on the soul of man. Upon the right or wrong use of our powers, by us and all moral agents, are suspended the destinies of eternity. The alternative is the rejection of all this evidence, or of the theory in question.

In fact, here is that form of pantheism which makes God the only real existence; of which, the universe of mind and matter is the phenomenon. We know nothing of substances, except their properties or powers. No other knowledge is conceivable; and if these have God as their immediate cause, there is nothing left, of which to predicate existence or to conceive it possible.

This doctrine, again, is utterly irreconcilable with the holiness of God. If it be so that God is "the only cause of natural effects," there can be no author of sin but he. He has declared that it is that abominable thing which he hates. He has assured us that he is angry with the wicked every day; and that, although he has no pleasure in their death, but that they turn





to him and live,—although he afflicts not willingly,—yet will he visit the workers of iniquity with a fearful destruction:—“snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest,—this shall be the portion of their cup.” He has shown his abhorrence of sin, by the fearful tide of indignation which was poured on the head of his own beloved Son, when our sins were laid upon him. Yet the doctrine in question involves, immediately and unavoidably, the conclusion, that so far from sin being hateful to God, he is the efficient and only cause of every sin of all creatures. Edwards avoids this conclusion, by recourse to the distinction between a privative and a positive cause. Of this we shall take notice in another place.

Edwards' doctrine of identity stands or falls with his theory of causation. He supposes us shut up to the alternative, that the cause of the continued existence of a substance is, either the antecedent existence of the same substance, or else, the immediate agency, will and power of God. But the very idea of an effect is, something distinct from the cause and abiding after it. It is something effected, something done, and therefore remaining;—and the idea of creative causation, is that of the production of substance,—of something that exists, and has forces; and not of mere transient shadows. Such is the scriptural idea of creation:—“He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”—Psalm xxxiii. 9. The reason, therefore, of the present existence of any creature, is not its antecedent existence; nor is it the immediate creative agency of God. But it now is, because God at the first made it,—gave it substance, and so determined its continuance; and, having thus created it, now sustains it, with that providential care in which he “upholdeth all things by the word of his power,”—thus continuing to the creatures the same being and identity which he bestowed at the first. Nor does identity consist in an arbitrary relation, determined by a decretive act of God's sovereignty, at variance with the creative system, and contrary to the essential reality. But it depends upon the continuous evolution of unchanging forces; implanted once by creative power, in conformity with sovereign wisdom.

It would seem, that the Scriptures so unequivocally attribute efficient causation to the creatures, that no one who has a reverence for the sacred volume could for a moment doubt it. Thus, in the narrative of the creation, what can be more explicit than the language employed? Gen. i. 11, 12.—“And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.” In what plainer terms could it be stated, that God bestowed upon the earth a power of fertility, which was an efficient cause of the vegetation that followed? And so, of the power of fructification, attributed to the grass, herbs and trees, after their kind. If it should be said, that the language is merely expressive of the appearance of things, let it be considered, that such expressions would convey no meaning whatever to us, but for that ineffaceable intuition of cause and effect which God has implanted in our minds;—that we are, in this place, addressed as being endowed with that intuition;—and that the language, makes direct appeal to this principle, and, under its guidance, can be understood in but one way. We need not dwell on the other statements of this chapter; each one of which is subject to similar remark. A single example will be sufficient:—“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion.” Is this language reconcileable with the idea that man is a mere puppet, assuming postures, and going mechanically through a set of fated actions, at the mere nod of his Creator, operating on him from behind the screen? Was there no real power conveyed, when he was told to subdue the earth, and have dominion? Is



not a generative causation attributed to him, when the creative Word says, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"? By this language, addressed to the first pair, in the instant of their creation, was indicated and confirmed a fruitful energy of nature,—a propagative force. And by virtue of it, flowing from them through the generations of the race, every human being in turn receives existence. "God rested the seventh day from all his works. . . . The works were finished from the foundation of the world."—Heb. iv. 3, 4. How is it consistent with this, to suppose the existence of each plant, animal and man, now in turn to call into requisition the same creative power which originated the first?

Whilst we assert the investiture of the creatures with a true and real causation,—an efficiency which is proper to them, apart from God's immediate agency, and which has a distinct operation of its own,—on the other hand, the creation is constructed with such wisdom and forecast, and so upheld and controlled by the immediate power and providential government of God, that all things occur in precise accordance with his will.

That the phenomena of nature are elements in the harmonious scheme of God's government, is unquestionable. He, at the first, certainly knew the whole energy of the various forces which he set in his works, and anticipated and designed all the results. And this, not only as those forces are viewed, simply, and apart from each other, but in their complex and multifarious combinations, which all were ordained by him. If the feeble powers of man can determine the time, place and extent of every eclipse of sun, moon or planet, for thousands of years to come, how much more did the Creator know the whole future of the powers of nature; which, having created, he must fully comprehend. The results, therefore, which flow with unfailing certainty from these causes, to which God thus intelligently gave origin, were as truly comprehended in the original plan as were the several forces which work out those ultimate results.

A striking fact to our purpose occurs in the solar system. It had been observed by astronomers that the general symmetry

of that system was marred by an extraordinary vacancy intervening between Mars and Jupiter, which, apparently, should have been filled by an additional planet. On the first day of the present century, a planet was discovered revolving in that space; but too small to satisfy the law of the case. That discovery was soon followed by others, until more than fifty asteroids have been found to revolve in the region indicated; and,—what is true of no other bodies in the solar system,—all these, though taking different courses in their revolutions round the sun, still cross a common track. The result is little short of demonstration that they once constituted a single planet, revolving in the path which they all twice cross in their annual course; and that by some tremendous catastrophe it was rent to pieces and the fragments hurled abroad. Facts familiar to science render it probable that events as extraordinary have occurred in the heavens even under the astronomer's eye. Luminaries which once shone with a steady brightness have been seen gradually for years to acquire an increasing glare, until they rivalled the brightest stars; then by degrees to decline with changing colour, and go out in utter darkness! Upon the supposition that the asteroids are the scattered fragments of a planet rent asunder by some convulsion, it must be admitted that the Creator knew as well what effect would result, when he originated the forces engaged, as he does now; and that, in creating and setting the forces in operation, he designed from the first, this, no less than the other consequences which have resulted. A machinist is not always to be held as having anticipated all the effects which follow the construction of his engine. Either he may be ignorant of the forces which are employed, or others may be introduced which he did not design. But if he knew precisely the proportion and relation of all the forces concerned, and designed the machine to be used precisely as it was, it is apparent that any result which follows must have been included in the design. So of God:—generating, himself, all the forces in the universe, and knowing perfectly all their relations, the conclusion is inevitable, that in laying the train he intended the explosion which occurred. Thus, then, all natural events, as





they are the effects of causes wisely originated by God, are elements in the operation of his hand,—features of his perfect plan.

But the Creator has not limited himself, in the administration of his government, to the original disposition of causes, in har-

monious adaptation to his purposes. On the contrary, this entire system of nature, in all the variety of its parts, in all their forces and functions, and the adaptations which everywhere abound, was constructed for the express purpose of constituting the creatures fitting instruments, through whom and upon whom the Creator himself might work; instead of being in and of themselves the adequate causes of the contemplated results. In one department of the divine government, this is indisputable. The intercourse of God with man has been conducted by a continual series of immediate divine interpositions. The plan of salvation, the incarnation and work of the Son of God, and the mission and operations of the Holy Spirit, both in his ordinary influences, and in his renewing and sanctifying agency,—all these are examples of such interpositions, entirely distinct from the original adaptations of nature. The miracles, to which the Bible bears witness, constitute formal and emphatic pledges, that God has not surrendered the universe to the government of mere natural laws; although these are all established by him, in perfect fitness for their offices; but that he himself is ever present, ever active, swaying a providential sceptre over his creatures.

On this subject, the language of McCosh, in his work on the divine government, is certainly unguarded; and, if we are not mistaken as to what he means to teach, we think his doctrine clearly erroneous. Thus, in one place, speaking of the harmonious adaptations which everywhere abound among the second causes, he says, "By means of this pre-established harmony, God can accomplish not only his general, but his individual purposes, and at the time, and in the way, intended by him. As entertaining this view of the perfection of the original constitution of all things, we see no advantage in calling in special interpositions of God acting without physical causes,—always excepting the miracles employed to attest divine revelation.

But, speaking of the ordinary providence of God, we believe that the fitting of the various parts of the machinery is so nice that there is no need of any interference with it. We believe in an original disposition of all things; we believe that in this disposition there is provided an interposition of one thing in reference to another, so as to produce the individual effect which God contemplates; but we are not required by philosophy or religion to acknowledge that there is subsequent interposition by God with the original dispositions and interpositions which he hath instituted. 'This is in fact the great miracle of Providence, that no miracles are needed to accomplish his purposes.'—*Taylor*.\*

In reference to the answer to prayer, he rejects the supposition of Chalmers, that God may interpose among the physical agents, beyond the limit to which human sagacity can trace the operation of law. His own solution he thus states:—"How is it that God sends us the bounties of his providence? how is it that he supplies the many physical wants of his creatures? how is it that he encourages industry? how is it that he arrests the plots of wickedness? how is it that he punishes in this life notorious offenders against his law? The answer is,—by the skilful pre-arrangements of his providence, whereby the needful events fall out at the very time and in the very way required. When the question is asked, How does God answer prayer? we give the very same reply:—it is by the pre-ordained appointment of God, when he settled the constitution of the world, and set all its parts in order."†

The theory of pre-established harmony originated with Leibnitz. It grew out of the Cartesian theory as to the impossibility of the mind immediately perceiving external objects. He therefore supposed the soul to be incapable of acquiring any information through the bodily senses; and the body to be in no wise influenced or controlled by the powers of the soul. But they are mutually adapted to each other, in such a way, that while the body, under the operation of merely physical causes, enacts its part in the drama of life, the soul evolves from within a series of states and a continuous consciousness, which precisely corre-

\* McCosh on the Divine Government, p. 190.

† Ibid. p. 238.





spond with the contemporaneous states and condition of the body, a panorama being as it were unfolded within to the recognition of the intellect, *pari passu* with the development of the corresponding phenomena, in the body and external nature. In this respect man is a microcosm,—the harmony thus instituted between body and soul being typical of what is universal throughout the creation. Men “perceive what passes without them, by what passes within them, answering to the things without; in virtue of the harmony which God has pre-established, by the most beautiful and the most admirable of all his productions; whereby every simple substance is by its nature, if one may so say, a concentration and a living mirror of the universe, according to its point of view.”\*

The author of this theory carefully guards against the error of McCosh. It being objected to his doctrine, that it would bring the whole economy of grace within the province of natural laws, and the instrumentality of second causes, Leibnitz replies, that “God by supernatural influences supplies natural defects, and so succours the soul by his grace, that it accomplishes what by natural powers it could not do. Since, then, God from the beginning proposed to bestow these special favours upon his creatures, he ordered things in such a way that in the natural world all results should so present themselves as to correspond with these effects in the kingdom of grace. And whenever the powers with which the creatures are invested are not sufficient to this, he provides by miracle that which may serve to keep up the parallel; the operations which belong to the kingdom of grace, being included in the nexus of things, not excluded from it.”† In another place he remarks, that “when God works miracles, he does not do it in order to supply the wants of nature, but those of grace.”‡ Of miracles he distinguishes two classes, viz., wonders wrought by angelic power, and miracles proper, the immediate works of omnipotence.§ These teachings, however defective, are much less exceptionable than those of McCosh. The one leaves an indefinite margin, for

\* Corresp. Leibnitz and Clarke, 1717, p. 241. † Leibn. Tentamina Theodiceæ, § 64, note. ‡ Leibn. and Clarke, p. 3. § Ib. p. 118; Tent. Theod. § 249.

the immediate interposition of God. The other limits it to the attesting of revelation. We cannot but look upon this theory as meagre and unsatisfactory. It does not differ from the philosophy of Pope which McCosh so justly condemns, unless it be in recognising a more complex disposition of the powers of nature, at the beginning; and a more special regard for the several particular results thence flowing. The radical error of the theory, is in respect to the office to which creation was constructed. It assumes that office to be such, that the admission of God's immediate hand would imply the discovery of an imperfection in the original structure. “The fitting of the various parts of the machinery is so nice, that there is no need of any interference with it.” A class of miracles is excepted; but all things else are subjected to the exclusive disposition of second causes. But, if the nature of the system be such, that the interposition of God's immediate agency would imply a defect, the assumption is as fatal to the admission of any sort of miracle, as of any other interposition whatever.

In fact, if we are to understand the phrase “divine revelation” in any such restricted sense as the argument of our author requires, the suggestion that the sole or chief office of miraculous interpositions is to attest particular communications from God, implies an exceedingly defective conception of their true significance. Whilst it is a fact that miracles did serve to attest divine revelations, it is equally true, and of as great significance, that, to the greater part of the human family, the order is reversed, and it is the Scriptures which attest the miracles. Many indeed of the most sublime and signal miracles which the world has ever witnessed, were wrought ages before the oldest book of Scripture was written; and whatever purpose they may have served, in attesting communications from God to the contemporary populations of the earth, they could not, in the nature of the case, fulfil such an office to the subsequent generations; to whom they have been made known by revelation. Such,—to omit all that respects the immediate family of Adam,—was the translation of Enoch, the deluge, the confusion of tongues, the destruction of



the cities of the plain, and the various miraculous events in the lives of the patriarchs. So far from filling the subordinate office of mere attestation to particular revelations, miracles constitute, in and of themselves, a revelation the most interesting and important, and which is fundamental to every other. They testify unequivocally to the very fact which our author denies,—that the omnipotent God exercises a direct and personal providence over all his works; in which he employs second causes, when he sees good, but is always and altogether unrestricted by them; and whether acting in them, or aside from them, puts forth his own power, in an influence which is intimate and all-pervasive. Such is the principle which God himself states, as the reason of the wonders wrought on Pharaoh:—"In very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."—Ex. ix. 16. To it Joshua refers all the scenes witnessed by Israel in Egypt and the wilderness:—"that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty."—Josh. iv. 24. Such was the plea of Hezekiah, in answer to which the angel of the Lord smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand:—"O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only."—2 Kings xix. 19. And for this purpose was the proud king of Babylon driven forth among the beasts:—"until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."—Dan. iv. 32.

The original system and structure of nature was, unquestionably, perfect. But to what office? Certainly not to work out its own results, to the exclusion of the agency of its Author. Creation is not a great clock, wound up at the first, and then left to tell off its fated periods; but a vast and complicated instrument, perfect in all its parts, symmetrical and harmonious in the multiform play of its various forces; each of which has an energy of its own, but all inspected by the watchful eye, and ruled and guided by the immediate hand, of the omnipresent Creator. By his agency, governing and controlling all those

powers, and modifying the motions by his omnipotent will, in a way of perfect harmony with the structure of the several parts, and the order of the whole, all is made to conform, in a system of manifold wisdom and goodness, to the accomplishment of his purposes of grace and glory. "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 36.

Viewed in any other light, miracles are altogether anomalous, conveying the unworthy imputation that the Creator has been reduced, by unforeseen contingencies, to the alternative of failure in his designs, or of turning aside the actual tendency of events by violence, and forcing them into such channels as will suit his plans. Hence Hume's false and insidious definition of a miracle:—"A violation of the laws of nature." When, however, we view the whole scheme of creation and providence, as framed with the one object of providing instruments, in the use of which the Creator may actively reveal the glory of his various attributes, all such unworthy conceptions vanish. The laws of nature show themselves fully adapted to accomplish the part for which they were designed,—flowing on in undisturbed current to the final consummation; whilst, gliding harmoniously into their channel, and mingling in the common tide, special providences and miracles occur, to give a voice to all, and testify in living tones, to the hearts of men, that He whom sun, moon and stars proclaim, is not the Fate of Epicurus, rolling on in undeviating course, crushing all beneath its iron wheel,—no blind abstraction enthroned in heartless severance from human cares and sympathies,—but a living, active, personal Providence, the Lord and Life of all; and, though unapprehended by sense, still very near to every one of us. Creation, viewed apart, presents a noble form,—a structure the contemplation of which is suited to exalt the soul, filling its expanding capacities with sublime and amazing conceptions. But still it is like some piece from the chisel of a Phidias, a study of delight to the artist; but marble, cold and lifeless; mocking the expectant ear with its silence, and tiring the eager eye with its lofty but unchanging look. But as we gaze in trembling awe, as with beating hearts





we behold the tremendous train rolling on forever and forever, in resistless, headlong, hopeless career,—as we begin to hear the ensnaring whispers of atheistic unbelief, and ask ourselves whether creation itself be not a living thing, a very God, we are aroused from such false and fatal speculations. There is a sudden pause, without confusion or jar! The sun, which from the birthday of man had continually swept across the heavens, in his seemingly fated and unending course, rests from his career on Gibeon; and the moon, in the valley of Ajalon. We behold again, whilst insatiate Death sees his bars of steel rent asunder, and his victims set free. Foul diseases fly the touch of sharers of flesh; and even the insensate elements listen and obey their voices! As we witness these things, and observe their occasions, nature acquires speech,—the lifeless marble becomes warm with vital heat; and in sublime and soul-moving accents, her voice proclaims, that the God who made all things, governs all things still, and condescends to care for man; that his gracious providence is active in our low affairs; that “this God is our God for ever and ever, and will be our guide even unto death.”

So, in the communication to us of the Scriptures, in the incarnation and work of Christ, in the controlling, the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit,—in all these we have illustrations of the habitual and immediate intervention of God with his works; constituting a clearly marked and conspicuous feature of his government. These cannot, therefore, be inconsistent with, but constitute a cardinal element in, the original plan,—a feature in its perfection.

Further, we may not forget that there are other created powers in the universe, beside laws and physical causes. The angels,—“are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”—Heb. i. 14. On the other hand are Satan and his angels, “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”—Eph. ii. 2. These all are agencies most potent, and produce effects most important, not only moral, but physical, as is seen in the afflictions of Job, the temptation of the Son of God, the case of the demoniac of Gadara, and others. Above all these

is the Spirit of God, ruling over the powers of men and devils; making their wrath to praise him, and restraining the remainder thereof; working in men's hearts, the righteous and the wicked,—both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

So completely has this method of immediate interposition characterized the history of the government of the world, that, so far as man is concerned, there are absolutely no results which, first and last, flow from the unmixed operation of second causes. In one form or other the agency of God's own hand has entered into and modifies every thing. There is no event of which we may not truly say, in this special sense, “This is the finger of God.” Nor may we limit the sovereignty of God to the modes of intervention here named. These attest that he does not stand an idle spectator, but actively interposes his immediate agency, in the government of his creation. And the Scriptures abundantly testify that these are but examples and illustrations of the whole policy of his administration;—that he is no more really present in his sovereign power, amid those amazing displays of omnipotence and majesty, in the presence of which the earth trembles and the mountains are shaken, than in that ordinary providence, by which “he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”—Eph. i. 11. In fact, no doctrine is more constantly and emphatically taught in the Scriptures, than that of a particular providence, exercised by the immediate hand of God. “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”—Matt. x. 29, 30. “I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.”—Isa. xlv. 7. “O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.”—Psalm cxxxix. 1-5. “He giveth to all, life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the



face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. . . . For in him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts xvii. 25–28. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psalm xxxiv. 7. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Psalm xli. 1. Such are the assurances on which faith relies,—the pledges to which prayer appeals. To say that such places only mean to teach that the frame of nature was so constructed at the beginning, as mechanically to work out provision for the case of the afflicted, is to deny the express terms of the assurances often repeated, and attested by the Spirit in the believer's heart. It is, to mock his hunger with ashes. Not mere escape from danger does he want. Not mere provision for his necessities does he seek. But he seeks covert in the bosom of a present God,—a living, active, loving guardian and benefactor. Such a refuge the Holy Spirit offers in the word. Such a refuge the Comforter within persuades him to expect. The alternative is, the atheism of contradicting these testimonies; or, the admission that God does exert a constant and immediate agency in all events.

In viewing the subjects of the providential government, all are naturally resolved into two elements;—the one, comprehending the whole material system, the worlds and the lower orders of creation; which, in all its extent, constitutes the stage and its furniture, upon which the scenes of divine providence are enacted; rather than the proper subjects of that providence. The general characteristics here, are uniformity and permanence. The other element comprehends the moral universe, constituting the subjects of God's government; the objects for whom, in subservience to the divine glory, the material system was created. The moral system, again, is subdivided into the two classes of men in the flesh, and disembodied spirits, human and angelic. In the general government of the material system, the reign of mere natural law would seem to be undisturbed and universal, except at points where the system is implicated in more or less intimate connection with the intellectual and moral world. The great masses belonging

§ 9. Principles  
of administra-  
tion.

to this system are uniform in their motions, and their phenomena unvarying through successive cycles. In the animal kingdom, too, this uniformity is marked; although, placed as they are at the portals of the moral world, endowed with a measure of intelligence, which constitutes them harbingers of the higher system, related to man in an intimate subordination to his authority, and implicated in his relations to God's government, they realize something of the vicissitude which is characteristic of his condition. But the instant we enter the moral world, we find ourselves surrounded by evidences of a dispensation operating upon entirely other principles. The difference in the system of government is as essential and as great as is that between the nature of the unconscious clod and of the seraphic intelligence. In the one world, the bond of allegiance to the Creator's throne is that of physical laws, and through these is its government dispensed. In the other, the bond is that of moral law, addressed to the reason, attested by conscience, and claiming the allegiance of the will. The government in this system is conducted by the agency of Jehovah, in a manner which is continually more and more intimate and immediate, as we ascend the scale of moral being. Whilst men in their native state, apostate from God, are left in a great measure slaves to earth's vicissitudes, and the, to them, uncertain operation of nature's physical laws, the child of God realizes continually increasing evidence of the habitual interposition of God in his behalf; and anticipates with joy the time when he will be emancipated altogether from the bondage of physical causes, in the immediate presence of Him, of whom he exultingly cries, "All my springs are in thee!" and experience forever the dispensation of infinite love, from the immediate hands of infinite Wisdom and Power.

The field of inquiry at which we have thus glanced, would richly repay extensive exploration. We can only now suggest the conclusions bearing upon our present subject, which seem to flow alike from all the facts that are accessible, and from the whole tenor of the Scriptures. These are, that the two spheres of divine operation, the natural and the moral, are to be carefully distinguished from each other, in searching out the





manner of God's government;—that the principle of administration, in the one, is by physical causes and natural laws; in the other, by moral law and immediate dispensation;—that whilst in the mere material universe the operation of physical causes seems to be universal and exclusive, and in the world of spirits the divine administration is immediate, our world, as the abode of spirits clothed in flesh and fallen, is the scene of a complicated dispensation, in which the ordinary operation of physical causes and mediate instrumentality is modified by continual interpositions of the divine hand,—interpositions growing in frequency and demonstration, in proportion as he who is their subject draws nearer, and is qualified for the realm of light in God's immediate presence.

In regard to the details of the ordinary dispensation of this providential government, there are several things to be observed,

§ 10. *Mode of dispensation.* at which, however, we can only glance.

1. God is everywhere and immediately present among his creatures, "upholding all things by the word of his power."—Heb. i. 3. Two opposite ideas are here to be avoided; to wit,—the attributing of independent existence to the creatures; and the supposition that their necessary dependence militates against the reality of a continuous existence and identity in them. The supposition of a delegated self-existence is a contradiction in terms; and hence, of necessity, the creatures must be dependent, each instant, upon the power of the Creator, for the instant's continuance in being. Not only so; but the finite being, the springs of whose continued existence were in itself, would seem to be endowed with power to put off that existence. How gladly would the devils plunge into the gulf of annihilation! But they forever live, because the omnipotent God, in justice, forever says to them, Live, to endure the curse! On the other hand, the existence which is thus momentarily enjoyed at the will of omnipotence, is not the result of a succession of new creative acts. Logically, the two ideas,—that of a continued existence, sustained by God; and that of a perpetual series of new and transient creations, of the same form and character, and sustaining the same relations,—are altogether

distinct, and cannot by any process be reduced to identity. Morally, the latter breaks up all ties of relation between the creatures, and of them towards God, and reduces the universe to an unreal phantasm. Scripturally, this conception has no countenance; but, on the contrary, God's upholding power, sustaining the creatures in a really continuous existence, is constantly asserted. This upholding agency has regard both to the material and spiritual creation; every part of which alike has its being in God. The following points have more immediate respect to man.

2. In all men the Holy Spirit exerts a continually restraining energy, so as to keep their corruptions, as well as all their powers, within the bounds which he has appointed, for his own holy purposes. Man having so departed from God as to be altogether disinclined to reverence or love him, or to obey his law, all bonds of moral restraint are broken, and the only reason why men, thus lost to holy motives, are not rivals in wickedness to the lost inhabitants of hell, is, that God in mercy, by his providence and Spirit, puts restraint upon their native corruptions, allowing them to flow out so far as may serve to accomplish his holy purposes, but otherwise holding them under his omnipotent restraint. Hence the language of the Psalmist; "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psalm lxxvi. 10. In this fact we have the key to Paul's statement, that "whom he will he hardeneth."—Rom. ix. 18. By relaxing the bonds and allowing corruption to flow, he permits the heart to grow hard and the conscience to become seared.

3. Even where there is not an absolute restraint put upon the corruptions, the natural impulses and dispositions of men, they are so limited that they may take no other than that direction which will fulfil the divine purposes. Thus, in the case of the hostility of the brethren of Joseph, they were restrained from putting him to death, but left to sell him into Egypt, so bringing to pass the very thing which they were endeavouring to prevent; so that Joseph truly says, "It was not you that sent me hither, but God."—Gen. xlv. 8. The rulers





of Israel were thus restrained in regard to the murder of the Son of God; so that they, who were continually breaking out into factions and imbruing their hands in blood, insist upon the execution of Christ by the Roman governor, with the plea, that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death. But this came to pass that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, that thus it should be. His body must be lifted up from the earth as a curse; and his blood must flow as a sacrifice;—two circumstances which did not meet in any Jewish mode of execution. The feature of the divine administration here pointed out, solves the difficulty that is sometimes apprehended, in such places as that of Peter:—"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. God neither gave nor stimulated wrong dispositions in the actors in that atrocious scene, nor did he give a bare permission; "but such as had joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation to his own holy ends, yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceeded only from the creature and not from God."\*

4. A controlling influence of a somewhat different kind is illustrated in the sixth chapter of the book of Esther. Sleep is withheld from the king, and his wakeful thoughts are led to the records of his reign, the reading of which gives occasion to the honouring of Mordecai, and the defeat of all the plans of Haman. Essentially similar in its nature was the influence exerted in the minds of Pharaoh and of Nebuchadnezzar, inducing their prophetic dreams, which were interpreted by Joseph and Daniel. Thus it is evident that God can and does exert a direct influence over the minds of men, even the ungodly, inducing thoughts suited to the accomplishing of his purposes. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."—Prov. xxi. 1.

5. On the other hand, in all holy exercises and right actions, the immediate power of the Holy Spirit is active, creating right

\* Westminster Confession, ch. v. 4.

affections, and leading and impelling his people to do such things as are in accordance with God's holy will; so that whilst the liberty of the agent is not taken away, but he is freed from his previous bondage to corruption and sin; and, by the exercise of his natural faculties, "worketh out his own salvation with fear and trembling," on the other hand, as to the real efficiency and power, "it is God which worketh in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12, 13. It is to this, especially, that the apostle James refers, when, denying that we are tempted of God, but of our own corruptions, he, on the contrary, adds that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."—James i. 17.

6. Beside these modes of operation in the ordinary providence of God, who shall forbid, that in many ways, untraceable by us, but adoringly witnessed by blessed spirits, the immediate power of God should interpose in human affairs? We are persuaded that the whole analogy of his government, and the tone of the entire Scriptures, lead directly to this conclusion. We are confident that we express but the common experience and the common sentiment of his people,—of those with whom is "the secret of the Lord,"—in declaring our conviction that in multitudes of instances they are indebted to the fatherly care of an almighty hand, which, concealed from carnal observation, but recognised by faith, dispenses blessings which the natural action of second causes would never have conveyed.

The government of God, thus variously administered, is universal in its dominion, and constant in its exercise; it has respect to the most minute, as well as the greatest results; and is absolute in its sway. It is not a mere influence, but a power. Omnipotent to arrest the sun in its course, to loose the fountains of waters, or to command the sea back to its appointed place,—it with equal sovereignty rules the wills of men, angels and devils. To assert the will to be of such a nature as to be necessarily independent of God, is to say that he, in making it for his own purposes, placed it beyond his own power. To say that it cannot be subject to an effectual control, without destroying its moral agency, is to pretend to



have fathomed all its depths, and measured the whole extent and nature of its relations to the creative hand. It is to assume that there cannot be in the soul any susceptibilities, accessible even to the power of its Maker, outside the sphere of its self-conscious activity;—which is most absurd. To deny that God can rule the creature he has made, as it is, endowed with attributes bestowed by him, is to imagine the delegated power of God which resides in the creature to be superior to that which is in the Creator himself; which is a contradiction in terms. It is to limit God; which is atheism.

In short, the universe was framed specifically to reveal the very truth concerning the nature of that God who is everywhere and ever present, the sovereign of all, essentially active, and infinitely wise and good. This it does, not by presenting him, once active in creation, and then forever quiescent,—once sovereign, in decreeing the order of creation, and the events of providence; and then forever an inactive spectator;—once present with his creatures, in giving them existence and attributes; and then forever withdrawn within himself;—once, in the beginning, exhausting the stores of his beneficence; and then forever ceasing to bestow. Such is not the God of the Bible,—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,—the glorious worker whom nature proclaims. The creatures, as we have already seen, were formed with two designs;—to be objects in whom the glory of the perfections of God should have exercise and display;—and to be made happy in apprehending that glory. As finite, they could not apprehend the glory of God, or perceive his activity, except as displayed upon finite things. Hence, in this aspect of it, the creation itself;—presenting, on the one hand, an expanse vast enough, alike in physical and moral dimensions, to exhaust the loftiest created powers; and on the other, in its details, stooping to the reach of the meanest capacity. Again, in but two ways could our infirmity trace the working, and in it, the glory, of God,—in the universe thus created;—as he works *through* the creatures; that is, by the mediation of second causes; and as he *acts upon* them, by his own immediate power. The uniformity and mediate action of

the one mode of operation is requisite, alike to the free agency and happiness of the creatures and the revelation of the wisdom and unchangeableness of the Creator. The speciality of the other, is as necessary and important, alike to the creatures, and to the revelation of the living God. By this means is it made known that it is God, and not nature, that ruleth; and that everywhere and in all things he is,—the ever present, ever active, ever sovereign and gracious God. Said the Saviour, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."—John v. 17. The attempt to ignore his immediate agency in the orderings of special providences, out of respect to the orderly working of the laws of nature, is as unphilosophical and unscriptural as is the denial of second causes, and the reference of all things to God as not only the first, but the only, cause. "God in his ordinary providence maketh use of means; yet is free to work without, above and against them, at his pleasure."\* In all the modes of dispensation it is the same God. In all he works with equal and absolute sovereignty. In all he is most holy and good. In all there is the most perfect harmony, and concurrence to the wise and holy designs. In the interpositions of his own hand he does no violence to the laws and order of nature, which he himself ordained. In the procession of second causes and ordinary providence he does not preclude, but anticipates and provides for, the immediate exertions of his power. In each alike are unfolded the harmonious elements of the perfect plan, which, formed in the beginning, and infallibly accomplished in all its details, shall be displayed in the amazing glory of the whole result, at the consummation of all things; to the unspeakable blessedness of his saints, and the infinite honour of their wonderful God.

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\* Westminster Confession, ch. v. 8.





## CHAPTER IV.

## ADAM THE LIKENESS OF GOD.

"Now heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled  
Her motions, as the first great Mover's hand  
First wheeled their course; earth in her rich attire  
Consummate lovely smiled; air, water, earth,  
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swam, was walked  
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained,  
There wanted yet the master work, the end  
Of all yet done; a creature who, not prone  
And brute, as other creatures, but endued  
With sanctity of reason, might erect  
His stature, and upright, with front serene,  
Govern the rest; self-knowing, and from thence  
Magnanimous, to correspond with heaven;  
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
Descends; thither with heart and voice and eyes  
Directed in devotion, to adore  
And worship God supreme, who made him, chief  
Of all his works."—PARADISE LOST, Book vii.

It is the morning of creation. The world has been, by the almighty Word of God, made of nothing. Light has been shed upon the formless mass; the waters gathered together; the dry land exposed and planted with grass, herbs and trees; the heavenly hosts have been marshalled to their stations and services; the waters peopled with fish; the forests and plains with the inferior animals, and the air with the feathered tribes. Thus far the narrative of Moses flows without interruption, and the scenes of the creation pass continuously before us. But here occurs a pause in the story. A council of the Triune Creator sits; and from it issues a decree for the creation of man:—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the

fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 26, 27.

It is scarcely necessary to insist that the creation here announced is not merely of the first man, but of the species. This is involved in all which follows, and is announced in the decree itself:—"Let us make *man*, and let *them* have dominion." It is, *אדם*,—not, *איש*,—*man*, and not, *a man*. So, too, in the Septuagint and Vulgate, the generic, and not the individual designation, is used. It is, *ἀνθρώπος* and *homo*,—not *ἄνθρωπος* nor *vir*.

Great prominence is given to Adam's likeness to God. Twice mentioned in the decree of his creation, it is twice re-stated in the account of the work. There are some facts which would seem to give plausibility to the supposition that the same idea is couched in his name,—that it is derived from, *אדם*, *dam*, meaning, *likeness*. Adam was not made of earth, (*אדמה*), *adamah*, but of dust, (*אפר*), *haphar*. In the following places the word, (*אפר*), dust, is used to describe the material of man's body:—Gen. ii. 7, iii. 19; Job vii. 21, x. 9, xvii. 16, xxi. 26, xxxiv. 15, xl. 13; Psalm xxii. 29, xxx. 9, ciii. 14, civ. 29; Eccl. iii. 20, xii. 7; Dan. xii. 2. In no instance, is the word, (*אדמה*), earth, or ground, so employed. Further, the material of his corporeal frame is neither mentioned in the original narrative of his creation and the giving of his name, in Gen. i. 26, 27, nor in the subsequent rehearsal of the same facts, in Gen. v. 1, 2; but is introduced in another place, (Gen. ii. 7,) in an incidental manner, unaccompanied with any allusion to the giving of his name; whilst in both of the places where his naming is mentioned, it is in pointed connection with the assertion of his likeness to God.—"And God said, Let us make *Adam* (*the likeness*) in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created Adam in his own image."—Gen. i. 26, 27. "In the day that God created *Adam*, in the likeness of God made he him, male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name *Adam*, (*the likeness*), in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 1, 2. Thus, too, the



name was an element in the blessing; a fact which seems best to accord with its meaning, the likeness. On the other hand, when, in the utterance of the curse, a form of expression is used, which throws emphasis upon the mention of the material of his body, we look in vain for any allusion to his name; although had it signified, earth, such an allusion was confidently to be expected. It is not said, "Adam (earth) thou art," &c., but "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. iii. 19. How accordant with the genius of the Hebrew language would have been the introduction of Adam's name, had it meant, earth, will be seen by reference to such places as 1 Sam. xxv. 25:—"As his name is, so is he; Nabal (folly) is his name, and folly is with him." This figure (paronomasia) is frequent in the Hebrew Scriptures, and, from the nature of the case, is generally lost in translation; *e.g.* Judges xv. 16; Amos viii. 1, 2. In Matt. xvi. 18, we have a memorable example:—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock (petra) I will build my church."

The manner of Adam's creation fixes our attention, no less emphatically, upon a peculiar and divine nature, distinguishing him above the other works of God. Of the other creatures, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass;—Let the waters bring forth the moving creature;—Let the earth bring forth the living creature, cattle, &c.; and it was so." But of man the Creator appears in a more immediate and peculiar manner the builder of his body, and the author of his soul. "God said, Let us make man," &c. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." This formation of his body by the finger of God, and origin of his spirit from the inspiration of the Almighty, was what entitled Adam to that noble designation by which Luke calls him, "the Son of God."

To all this, add the contrast which Moses holds forth, between the likeness inscribed on Adam by his Maker, and that transmitted by him to Seth and his seed. When Moses wrote, the generations of Adam's other sons had all perished in the flood. His narrative of them is brief, and leaves us to infer what sort of nature they inherited, from the character of their deeds, and

the fearfulness of their doom. But he wrote for the children of Seth; whose seed constitute the present population of the globe; and he is therefore more specific, in describing the nature which they inherited. "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name, Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth."—Gen. v. 1-3. Adam's name remained; but the glory of the likeness was obscured; and his son inherits,—not the original and perfect image of God,—but the likeness of his fallen parent. "How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!"

There is a difference in the meaning of the words, image, and likeness, as applied to Adam; which, although not essential, is worthy of notice. The word, image, seems to express, properly, a mere form, or external figure, as when it is said, "Ye shall break down their images."—Ex. xxiii. 24. But the word, likeness, is more full in its meaning; as expressing a resemblance, in all respects as complete as possible. It intimated, not only a general likeness to God, in the attributes of Adam's nature, but an intimate resemblance, in his endowments, attitude and actions. It expressed not only the possession of will, conscience and reason, says Luther, but "that he possessed such a reason, and such an understanding, that he understood and knew God; and a will by which he willed and desired that which God willed and desired."\* The use of these two words thus associated was also designed to emphasize man's likeness to God.

We have already intimated man's likeness to God to have been set up for the instruction and admiration, not of man only, but of the heavenly intelligences. To limit the design to earth, is objectionable, for several reasons. (1.) Adam had no human fellows to behold that image, as in original perfection it shone in him. (2.) It was he as the impersonation of the whole race, and, after him, the race collectively rather than individually, that constitute the image,—an image in the light of which each

\* Luther on the First Five Chapters of Genesis. Edinburgh, 1858, p. 444.





individual shines; but which, in its full glory, is only seen in the whole.—“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion. . . . In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful.”—Gen. i. 26-28, “He blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.”—Gen. v. 2. (3.) The angels have been from the first employed in the service of man, as their proper business. They are “all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”—Heb. i. 14. They have been astonished witnesses of all the wonders which man’s salvation unfolds; as Paul says of the apostles,—“We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.”—1 Cor. iv. 9. And they have been eager students of the mysteries of God’s glory which man’s history reveals. “Which things,” says Peter, speaking of the doctrines of the preached gospel,—“Which things the angels desire to look into.”—1 Pet. i. 12. (4.) The mission of man as God’s image finds its consummation in the second Adam, and in his body the church, exercising from the throne of heaven that dominion which was stated as one feature of Adam’s image, in the decree for his creation; and swaying a sceptre and revealing a glory, on which every eye in the universe will gaze, in wonder and joy; and which every beholder will celebrate and adore.

Thus, amid the shoutings of the sons of God, was man installed, the likeness of his Maker. What a high dignity and prerogative was this! But wherein did the likeness consist? Certainly it was not in his bodily shape. “To whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?”—Isa. xl. 18. It is a trait of man’s atrocious apostasy, that the heathen have “changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.”—Rom. i. 23. The utmost that can be said in this respect, as to Adam’s body, is, that in beauty and dignity of form, and skill of mechanism, it was worthy to be the crowning work of God’s material creation; constituting a well-adapted home for the illustrious spirit that dwelt therein. In one respect, indeed, it shared in

the likeness in which the spirit shone. It was immortal. As created, it was endowed with a life which was altogether independent of that decay and dissolution which were characteristic of all the lower creatures beside. To the inferior brute creation, decay and death were normal conditions. By occasion of this, the earth displays that ever changing scene, and exhaustless variety, which serve to display the power and resources of the Creator. These are seen in the varying proportions of genera and species, which fill the earth, and the unfailing perpetuation of tribes and families; which remain whilst individuals and generations continually vanish away. Amid the perishing myriads of animated nature Adam sat enthroned, showing God’s image, as well in the immortality of his imperishable body, as in those higher moral perfections which clothed his undying soul. As the fall of man did not first kindle the fires of hell,—they were “prepared for the devil and his angels,”—so, neither did it originate the decay and physical death, which prey upon the irrational creatures of earth. These were their original inheritance. But the apostasy, which cast the moral nature of man into the gulf of depravity and the abyss of hell, the proper home of the rebel angels, at the same time robbed his body of its native immortality, and debased it to companionship with the beasts, which lie down in the dust and perish. As made at first, Adam’s body was alike free from the power of disease and pain, and superior to the sceptre of death. Clothed in the likeness of Him that liveth, there was no element of his being liable to the influence of decay, nor subject to the power of dissolution. His whole body was redolent with the energy of an ever growing vitality, and attuned to the experience of ever present enjoyment, in the service and praise of his Maker.

We have already alluded to the fact that man’s nature was designed and constructed so as to shadow forth dimly, yet really, the relations of the three Persons subsisting in the one divine nature. In this respect the office of the first Adam was correspondent with that of the Second. He was the likeness of Elohim, God the Father, as the representative of the Godhead, and head of the subsistence of the other





persons. In Adam the generative function was designed as a means of revealing that mysterious generation which is in God; and the breath of life was a symbol or type of the Holy Spirit proceeding from God.

On this subject two errors are to be avoided. The one is "intruding into those things which we have not seen, vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind."—Col. ii. 18. The other is a refusal to receive those things which were written by the finger of God, for our learning. (Rom. xv. 4.) As to the manner of the divine generation, the Scriptures are silent; and it becomes us, therefore, to lay our hands upon our mouths. This much is certain, that this most holy mystery is infinitely removed from any thing analogous to the manner of carnal generation, and that any imagination, even, which should attempt to trace such an analogy, or attribute any thing sensual to the doctrine, is an atrocious insult to the spirituality, the unapproachable purity and holiness, and the unsearchableness of the divine nature. In no form has the depravity of man been more signally displayed, than in the abominations which have sought apology or claimed justification from this ineffable feature in the nature of God.

But, whilst we are thus solemnly admonished to "stand in awe and sin not," the fact that men turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, does not derogate from the reality and preciousness of the grace. And reverence for the Holy One is not to be displayed nor cultivated, by closing our eyes or stopping our ears to any revelation of himself which he may have seen fit to make. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever,"—Deut. xxix. 29; and it is as much our duty reverently to study what is revealed, as to acquiesce and adore respecting what is not disclosed. As we have seen already, the testimony of the Scriptures is abundant and emphatic, to the fact of the eternal generation of the Son of God,—a generation consisting in a peculiar, unsearchable and eternal communication from the Father, and derivation by the Son, of the undivided divine essence in which both equally subsist, and by virtue of community in which these Two are One.

"The generation of Christ is a mystery so profound that it is dangerous for us to wade into this depth further than we have light from the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, let us be soberly wise in this matter. Let us rest satisfied in this, that we have the *rò óti*, that it is, plainly revealed; leaving the *rò dôti*, or manner how it is, to God himself, who alone hath the perfect knowledge of himself. . . .

"But tho' these things be so, yet some things we may safely adventure upon, in a consistency with divine revelation, to distinguish the generation of the Son from temporal generations among men, and to prevent dangerous errors and mistakes, by explaining negatively what this generation is not. And let us endeavour to do this with reverence and godly fear, looking up to the Father of lights for light from above. . . . The most proper generation in things created is *the vital production of another in the same nature*. A man begets a son; that is, he produceth another of the same nature with himself. There is a communication of the essence of the begetter to him that is begotten, whereby he that is begotten partakes of the same nature with him that begets. So here, in this eternal and ineffable generation, the Father communicates to the Son the same divine essence which he himself hath; so that the Son is of the same nature or essence with the Father. And, as among men, the son bears some likeness or similitude of the father, so, here, the eternal Son is the Father's express and perfect image and similitude, even 'the express image of his person.'—Heb. i. 3. Yea, the generation of the Lord Christ is the most proper generation,—a generation that is most properly so called. For, generation being *the production of the like in the similitude of nature*, therefore, where there is the nearest identity of nature, there must be also the most proper generation. But, here, the Father hath begotten a Son of the same individual nature or essence with himself. The generation of the Son must needs be far more proper than any temporal generation of the creature, because it is in a far more perfect manner, and the identity of nature is most perfect."\*

\* Wisheart's Theologia. Edinburgh, 1716, pp. 753, 754.



The considerations, therefore, which follow have no respect to the manner of the divine generation; which is absolutely unveiled and inscrutable; but are strictly limited to the fact of it, as heretofore defined. In this respect, the nature of Adam was evidently designed to shadow forth that of God. That such was the intention of Adam's parental relation to the race, we conclude, from several considerations.

1. It is clearly indicated, in the fact, that the relation of Adam to his posterity is designated by the very name by which is expressed that of the First Person to his only begotten Son; and the same characteristics and functions are predicated of it. Here, it is necessary to guard against an idea which seems to be commonly entertained. It is imagined, that the parental relation happened, as by chance, to come nearer than any other to suggesting a just conception of the relations of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity; and that it was therefore adopted as a casual symbol of those relations. But the manner in which these titles, and the corresponding predicates, are applied to those Persons, forbids this conception. We have seen, that they are not casually used, in common with other designations; nor is the phraseology ever of such form as to imply a figurative use of the names. But the name, Father, is the uniform and distinctive designation of the First Person, in his relation to the Second;—that of, Son, is similarly applied to the Second, in his relation to the First;—and the appropriated expression for the manner of this mutual relation is, generation. The fact that God has given man a nature to which these same terms are applied, is conclusive evidence, that man's nature was in this respect constructed as it is, for the express purpose of shedding forth the likeness of God. To invert the order, and suppose that the names, expressive of these relations in the divine nature, have been borrowed from some distant resemblance, casually traceable in man, is every way grossly at variance with just conceptions respecting God and our relations to him. In particular, is it an entire oblivion of the great fundamental fact, that the very office to which man was distinctively set apart, was the exhibition of God's likeness. The whole creation being intended to reveal the

glory of the Creator, man was formed as the crown of that work;—embodying in his person an epitome of it all; and especially designed to be the official representative and likeness of God in the presence of all. He is so announced in his creation, and so proclaimed by his name. In his knowledge, righteousness and holiness, he displays features essential and fundamental to the likeness, but possessed by him in common with myriads of heavenly intelligences; to whom he is announced as the official likeness of God. In this respect, they behold in him a peculiarity probably seen only on earth,—that he is a father of sons, with whom he shares in a common nature, which constitutes between them an identity, real, yet in perfect harmony with a distinct individual personality. To man, thus constituted, his Maker gives his own paternal name; and to his offspring, that of his own eternal Son; and designates the mode of the relation, in each case, by the same name,—generation. Can it be a question, whether the heavenly intelligences who behold all this, can fail to recognise, in the parental relation of Adam, a designed representation of that of the Holy One?—a representation most obscure and distant; as must be every lineament of every creature, which is compared with his glory;—yet intended to serve as a shadow, in the veiled light of which the intelligent creatures might study and learn the ineffable lustre of the original:—"the absolute oneness of the race, a vast image of the oneness of God himself; the distinct personal existence of each member of the race as a separate force, and yet an inseparable portion of the one whole, like a dim shadow of the divine personal plurality; and the very form of the oneness, and the plurality of the divine existence as made known to us, the idea of eternal paternity of eternal filiation, and of eternal procession, . . . . exhibited as far as nature could, in the relations of this new race,—fathers and sons, in an endless oneness of plurality, endlessly united."\*

2. The Creator has invested the relation of parent and child with a peculiar affection and tenderness, of a warmth and purity which has no counterpart. To this affection, thus implanted in

\* Breckinridge's Knowledge of God, Objectively Considered, p. 452.





our very nature by God, he makes continual appeal, in expressing his own ineffable love to his own Son. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. iii. 17. By this love of the parent to the child, we are taught to estimate the divine compassion to man; since "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. Of the prominent and central position which these relations occupy in the whole scheme of God, we have already had occasion to speak. And the same argument, then applied, to establish the doctrine of the eternal Sonship, is here equally appropriate. Is it possible to account for the fact here suggested, upon any other supposition, than that the paternal and filial relations among men are an adumbration and likeness of those in God?

3. Either there is a real analogy, however distant, between these human relations and those in the divine nature; or, there is not. If it be denied that there is, it remains with those who take that ground to account for the style of the Scriptures on the subject. If it is admitted that such analogy does exist, the alternative is, that it was intentionally enstamped on man, in his creation, as an element in his likeness to God; or, that it occurred by chance, without intention on the part of the Creator; and the illustration of the divine nature thence derived was an after-thought.

4. The remarkable argument of Paul, respecting the decorum to be observed in the public worship of God, is directly to our purpose. "A man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man."—1 Cor. xi. 7, 8. From this language, it is evident that the image in which man was created involved much more than that moral likeness which consisted in the knowledge of God, righteousness and holiness. Certainly, no one will pretend that these are characteristic of man, in contrast with woman. The Scriptures give us no reason to suppose that the highest attainments in the moral image of God are not as much within her reach as that of man. The history of the world seems to

show that, in the circumstances which surround us in our fallen estate,—and it is that of which Paul speaks,—piety is more congenial to the female character than to that of the other sex. In fact, the language of the apostle is unambiguous in predicating the image of which he speaks upon the fact that the man is the spring and efficient cause of the race:—"He is the image and glory of God. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man."

5. The design of man's creation was to constitute him an image of God, with specific respect to his triune nature, of which the eternal generation is a conspicuous feature. This end is announced in the decree for his creation:—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" and the distinctive relations of the Persons of the Godhead to the creation of this crowning work are plainly intimated in the narrative. "And God said, Let us make man."—Gen. i. 26. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life."—Gen. ii. 7. Here Elohim, God the Father, issues the decree; Jehovah Elohim, the Son, forms man of the dust; and the Spirit gives him life, as we have already shown.

6. Our position is immovably established by the fact that the second Adam distinctly asserts the relation subsisting between him and his people to be in the likeness of that between the Father and Son. He prays "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."—John xvii. 21–23. The doctrine of the mystical union will be particularly considered hereafter. That the relation of the second Adam to his people is parallel to that of the first Adam to the race, is plainly taught in the Scriptures. The bearing of this language of our Saviour, taken in connection with that parallel, upon the doctrine in question, will be apparent to the reader.

The phenomena of generation constitute one of those classes of facts, in respect to the works and ways of God, the familiarity



of which blinds us to their amazing character. Because we see it daily exemplified, it does not strike us as at all strange or remarkable, that the creatures should, by generation, reproduce themselves, in offspring after their own likeness. And yet it is one of the most wonderful and inscrutable displays of the wisdom, power and exhaustless resources of the Creator, probably without example elsewhere in the creation of God, and explicable upon no other supposition than that it subserves the grand design of Adam's whole constitution, the exhibition of an image of God;—the lower creatures man's likeness; he, that of his Maker. To attempt to search out or comprehend the essential nature of the process of generation were absurd; but there are some facts respecting it, which are self-evident, and which it is of importance distinctly to mark. When the lower animals were made, God said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply;" and when man was created, he was addressed in similar terms:—"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." It is not possible to explain this language otherwise, than as announcing the communication to them of a generative force, the cause of existence to their offspring, without further exertion of creative power. The correctness of this interpretation will scarcely be questioned; its verification is continually before our eyes. In respect to it, the alternative is to deny causation to the creatures altogether, and embrace the doctrine that God is the efficient and immediate cause of all effects. But what does the doctrine of propagation, here stated, involve? It implies that all the powers and forces which are, or, to the end of time, shall be, in the living creatures, vegetable and animal, by which the earth is filled and peopled, have their origin in those creatures which were made at the beginning of the world, and were implanted in them, thus to be developed and perpetuated in their seed to the end of time. It is not, that the powers which are developed in the offspring, have a likeness, merely, to those of the parent. This would be, to attribute the whole matter to a continual exercise of creative energy. But the forces of the offspring are derived by propagation from the parents. Those very forces numerically were in the parents, and so, back

§ 5. Wonderful nature of generation.

to the original progenitors. This transmission and identity of forces is readily recognised in the case of an individual parent and his offspring. As we trace the germ, gradually expanding, we have no difficulty in recognising and admitting that all the forces which are engaged flow from the parent; and so, until the matured embryo is separated from the body of the parent. But, when we contemplate the amazing extent and grandeur of the whole result, we recoil. And yet it is as undeniable, as it is inscrutable, that the entire sum of forces which operate in the living creation, vegetable and animal, were created and implanted in the primeval creatures at the beginning.

In an able dissertation which was read before the American Association, in 1857, by Prof. James D. Dana, there occurs a lucid exposition of some of the most important principles here involved. To the question, What is a species? this writer replies, "It is common to define a species as a group, comprising such individuals as are alike in fundamental qualities; and then, by way of elucidation, to explain what is meant by fundamental qualities. But the idea of a group is not essential; and moreover, it tends to confuse the mind, by bringing before it in the outset, the endless diversities in individuals, and suggesting numberless questions; that vary in answer, for each kingdom, class or subordinate group. It is better to approach the subject from a profounder point of view, search for the true idea of distinction among species, and then proceed onward, to a consideration of the systems of variables.

"Let us look first to inorganic nature. From the study of the inorganic world, we learn that each element is represented by a specific amount or law of force; and we even set down in numbers the precise value of this force, as regards one of the deepest of its qualities,—chemical attraction. Taking the lightest element as a unit to measure others by, as to their weights in combination, oxygen stands in our books as 8; and it is precisely of this numerical value in its compounds. Each molecule is an 8, in its chemical force or law, or some simple multiple of it. In the same way, there is a specific number at the basis of other qualities. Whenever, then, the oxygen amount and kind of force was





concentered in a molecule, in the act of creation, the species, oxygen, commenced to exist. And the making of many such molecules, instead of one, was only a repetition, in each molecule, of the idea of oxygen.

"In combinations of the elements, as, of oxygen and hydrogen, the resultant molecule is still equivalent to a fixed amount, condition or law of chemical force; and this law, which we express in numbers, is at the basis of our notion of the new species. It is not, necessarily, a different amount of force; for it may be simply a different state of concentration, or different rate or law of action. . . .

"The essential idea of a species, thence deduced, is this:—A species corresponds to a specific amount or condition of concentrated force, defined in the act or law of creation.

"Turn, now, to the organic world. The individual is involved in the germ-cell, from which it proceeds. That cell possesses certain inherent qualities, or powers, bearing a definite relation to external nature; so that, when having its appropriate nidus or surrounding conditions, it will grow, and develop out each organ and member, to the completed result; and this, both as to all chemical changes, and the evolution of the structure, which belongs to it, as a subordinate to some kingdom, class, order, genus and species in nature. The germ-cell of an organic being develops a specific result, and, like the molecule of oxygen, it must correspond to a measured quota, or specific law of force. We cannot apply the measure, as in the inorganic kingdom; for we have learned no method or unit of comparison. But it must, nevertheless, be true, that a specific predetermined amount, or condition, or law, of force, is an equivalent of every germ-cell in the kingdoms of life. I do not mean to say, that there is but one kind of force; but that, whatever the kind or kinds, it has a numerical value or law, although human arithmetic may never give it expression.

"A species among living beings, then, as well as inorganic, is based on a specific amount or condition of concentrated force, defined in the act or law of creation. Any one species has its specific value or law of force; another, its value; and so, for

all: and we perceive the fundamental notion of the distinction between species, when we view them from this potential standpoint. The species, in any particular case, began its existence when the first germ-cell or individual was created; and, if several germ-cells of equivalent force were created, or several individuals, each was but a repetition of the other: the species is in the potential nature of the individual, whether one or many individuals exist.

"Now, in organic beings, unlike the inorganic, there is a cycle of progress, involving growth and decline. The oxygen molecule may be eternal, as far as any thing in its nature goes. But the germ-cell is but an incipient state in a cycle of changes, and is not the same for two successive instants; and this cycle is such, that it includes in its flow, a reproduction, after an interval, of a precise equivalent of the parent germ-cell. Thus, an indefinite perpetuation of the germ-cell is, in fact, effected; yet it is not mere endless being, but, like evolving like, in an unlimited round. Hence, when individuals multiply from generation to generation, it is but a repetition of the primordial type-idea; and the true notion of the species is not in the resulting group, but in the idea or potential element, which is at the basis of every individual of the group; that is, the specific law of force, alike in all, upon which the power of each as an existence and agent in nature depends. Dr. Morton presented nearly the same idea, when he described a species as, 'a primordial organic form.'

"Having reached this idea, as the starting-point in our notion of a species, we must still, in order to complete and perfect our view, consider what is the true expression of this potentiality. For this purpose, we should have again in mind, that a living cell, unlike an inorganic molecule, has only a historical existence. The species is not the adult resultant of growth, nor the initial germ-cell, nor its condition at any other point: it comprises the whole history of the development. Each species has its own special mode of development, as well as ultimate form or result,—its serial unfolding, in-working and out-flowing: so that the precise nature of the potentiality in each is expressed





by the line of historical progress from the germ to the full expansion of its powers and the realization of the end of its being. We comprehend the type-idea, only when we understand the cycle of evolution through all its laws of progress; both as regards the living structure under development within, and its successive relations to the external world."

After a discussion of the permanence, and the variations, of species, Mr. Dana concludes that "we should therefore conceive of the system of nature as involving in its idea a system of units, finite constituents, at the basis of all things, each fixed in law; these units, in inorganic nature, as adding to their kinds by combinations in definite propositions; and those in organic nature adding to their numbers of representative individuals, but *not* kinds, by self-reproduction; and all, adding to their varieties by mutual reaction or sympathy. Thus, from the law within and the law without, under the Being above, as the Author, and sustainer of all law, the world has its diversity, the cosmos its fulness of beauty."\*

Implanted in the creatures at the beginning, by the creative hand, the forces thus described are seen operative everywhere, filling the earth with life and activity, and exerting a generative power, which, although occasional and transient in the individual, is unceasingly active and perpetual in species and races. Thus have we, in the investiture of Adam with the whole common nature of man, its unfailing energy as an active force, and its amazing fecundity, as it flows from generation to generation, through all the myriads of the human family, communicating distinct personal existence and part in the one common nature to each individual of the race an image, inconceivably grand, of the eternal generation in the divine nature. Of that generation, as we have seen, the prophet Micah speaks in terms, the analogy of which to these facts cannot fail to strike the reader:—"His *goings forth* have been from of old, from everlasting."

§ 6. *Definition of nature.* The word, nature, is that by which we designate the permanent forces, which were, at the beginning, incorporated in the constitution of Adam and the creatures;

and which, by their severalty, determine and define the several species of the living things. The word is sometimes defined inaccurately, as the name of a mere abstraction, which has no real existence;—as the designation applied to our conception of the mere aggregate of characteristics belonging to a given substance. The opinion to be adopted on this point depends upon that which we accept respecting the reality of the existence of the objects of such general conceptions as those expressed by nature, genera, species, &c. On this,—the question agitated between the Nominalists and Realists of the mediæval schools,—there are three several theories embraced by different classes of philosophers. According to the first of these, such conceptions are the mere products of the imaginative faculty,—results of logical deduction from the observation of many like individuals. A second theory represents universals as being realities which have an actual objective subsistence of their own, distinct from and independent of that of the particulars and individuals. A third holds that universals are, in a certain sense, realities in nature, but that the general conceptions are merely logical,—the universals not having an existence of their own separate from the individuals through which they are manifested. The first of these is the theory of a certain class of skeptical naturalists, who reject the whole teachings of the Scriptures on the subject. The second would seem to involve the idea that each several species is endowed with a diffusive substance, out of which the individuals of the species derive existence and attributes, in which they live and move. The third is the scriptural doctrine; according to which the substances were at the beginning endowed with forces, which are distinctive and abiding; and which, in organic nature, flow distributively, in continuous order, to the successive generations of the creatures. Of these forces, the word, nature, is the expression. In its proper use, it conveys the distinct idea of permanent in-dwelling force. It expresses the sum of the essential qualities or efficient principles of a given thing, viewed in their relation to its substance, as that in which they reside and from whence they ope-

\* American Journal of Science and Art, 1857, vol. xxiv. p. 305.



rate. Such is the sense in which the word is constantly employed in the Scriptures. Thus,—Rom. ii. 14, 15,—“When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness.” Here, the apostle, by the word, nature, indicates a force within, which he otherwise calls “the law written in their hearts,” the minister of which is conscience, testifying against sin and in behalf of holiness and God. Again: “If thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree!”—Rom. xi. 24. Here the idea of propagated and continuous force is conspicuous. So in Eph. ii. 3:—“Ye were by nature children of wrath,”—“nature,” is the designation of a force which Paul elsewhere calls “the law of sin and death,” (Rom. viii. 2,) which, by its perverse energy, is the cause of transgression and the curse. The word is not, therefore, expressive of a mere abstraction, but designates an actual thing, an objective reality. Thus, the human nature consists in the whole sum of the forces, which, original in Adam, are perpetuated and flow in generation to his seed. And our oneness of nature, does not express the fact, merely, that we and Adam are alike; but that we are thus alike, because the forces which are in us and make us what we are, were in him, and are numerically the same which in him constituted his nature and gave him his likeness. The body which is impelled by two diverse forces,  $x$  and  $y$ , moves in the direction of neither of them; but in that of a different force,  $z$ , the resultant of the two. Yet is neither of the forces lost; but merely modified, each by contact with the other. The new force,  $z$ , is simply  $x$ , modified by  $y$ . So, in the successive generations of the human race, so far as their traits are the result of propagation, so far as they are the offspring of their parents, theirs are but the same identical forces which were in those parents, only appearing under new forms. The alternative is, that the generation of creatures is a creative act; that the rela-

tion between parents and children is a mere fantasy, the former sustaining no causative relation to the latter. The word, nature, is used in the sense here stated, by Augustine, by Calvin, and generally by the old standard writers.

That which distinctively outshadowed the Third Person of the Trinity in Adam's natural constitution, was, the breath of life,—

§ 7. *The breath the Spirit's image.* the air, a fluid, all-pervasive; inscrutable alike in its motions and influences; sustaining life, and essential to its support, in all its forms, in all the creatures of earth; and spirated continually from the bosom of man. That this fluid, thus related to man, was designed to image forth the Spirit, proceeding from the First and Second Persons, is demonstrated by arguments substantially the same as the chief of those respecting Adam's likeness to the Father and Son. The name of the Spirit, both in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, is the same as that of the breath of man, and the air. The wind is frequently employed as the symbol of the Holy Spirit. See the Song of Solomon, iv. 16; Ezekiel xxxvii. 9, 10, 14; John iii. 8. Other arguments might be accumulated, were it necessary. We shall only add one, which is of itself conclusive. It consists in the unambiguous testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. After his resurrection, he, on one occasion, came among his assembled disciples with the salutation, “Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”—John xx. 21, 22. With this, compare the narrative in Acts ii. 2, 4:—“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” On the meaning of this remarkable action of the second Adam, and of the account of the pentecostal baptism, as bearing upon the present question, it is unnecessary to insist.

Of the doctrinal relations of the features of God's image in Adam's nature, thus enumerated, some things will appear in the course of the following discussions. Doubtless, much, on these, as on all other points, is reserved for the revelations of heaven.





Some of the natural attributes of Adam's soul were elements of the divine likeness; as, that it was an immaterial substance, like the Father of spirits, in having neither members, parts nor form; and that it was a living and immortal spirit. Not that it was endowed with an existence necessarily eternal. This is an incommunicable attribute of the everlasting God. It is indeed a common error, to assume immortality to be an essential and inseparable attribute of spiritual existence. But that is, to make the soul independent of Him who "upholdeth all things by the word of his power,"—Heb. i. 3; "by whom all things consist,"—Col. i. 17. The immortality of the soul consists in its endowment with a life, which the declared and unchangeable will of the Creator assures of perpetuity, under his upholding power;—a perpetuity which he could as easily confer upon matter, and withhold from spirits, were such his pleasure. In this, as in all things else, the first Adam exhibits a signal inferiority to the second. Whilst, in the one, life was a dependence on God, in whom he lived, (Acts xvii. 28,) to the other, it is "given to have life in himself."—John v. 26. In the former, immortality was possessed as a gift flowing perpetually from the upholding power of his Maker. Of the second Adam, the apostle adoringly cries, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto."—1 Tim. vi. 16. Whilst Christ is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person,"—Heb. i. 3,—Adam was a perfect but faint reflection of that glory and semblance of God's image.

Adam was made in the image of God, in a moral likeness; consisting in his endowment with moral agency, knowledge, righteousness and holiness; and in his position, crowned with glory, honour and dominion over the creatures.

He was a moral agent. This involves the possession of the attributes of reason, conscience and will. The office of reason was, to discriminate among actions and things, one from another, the true from the false;—to recognise and trace the relation of cause and effect;—to study the phenomena

of nature; searching out, combining and classifying their several processes and results, ascertaining their laws, and subordinating them to his service;—and, at the same time, to ascend through them to the recognition of a Great First Intelligent Cause;—the uncaused Author of all existence.

Adam was endowed with a conscience, or moral sense. The primary function of this attribute of his moral nature was the perception of the loveliness, the moral beauty and glory, of the divine character. As he was enabled to perceive the light, by the sense of vision, sounds by that of hearing, and other phenomena of nature by the other bodily senses; so was he enabled to perceive moral distinctions—the beauty of holiness, and the deformity of its opposite—by that moral faculty, which has been therefore designated, the moral sense. It is to be carefully noticed, that the character thus perceived by conscience, as belonging to moral dispositions and actions, is altogether distinct from the sense of obligation to imitate the holy. In the order of nature, the distinction which is perceived by the moral sense, the beauty which is seen in holiness, is both independent of, and prior to, the existence of the obligation. The former is a characteristic of the nature of God. The latter is created by his sovereign will. The former is designed to enable the creatures to share in the blessedness of God, by appreciating those ineffable perfections, in which, and the contemplation of them, God's glory and blessedness consist. The other is designed for the further advancement of the creatures in happiness, and their endowment with honour, by the imitation of those perfections; thus enjoying them for themselves, and reflecting them on each other. In both, the final end is the glory of God,—revealed to the creatures, blessing them, and the occasion to them of admiration, happiness and praise. The second function of conscience was the recognition of the duty, imposed by the will of God, to imitate the perfections of his nature which were thus discovered. In the light of this obligation, holiness is called, right; as being conformity to the rule or standard of duty,—the holiness of God; and unholiness or sin is designated, wrong; as being deflection from that rule. The ultimate principles to



which all the apprehensions and decisions of conscience are reducible are two. The first is, that the moral nature and attributes of God are infinitely lovely, and worthy to be admired of all creatures. The second is, that, thus lovely in God, and revealed to us, they are entitled to our zealous and constant imitation;—an imitation, to which we are bound, not only by virtue of their intrinsic excellence, but, especially and authoritatively, by the will of God, our maker and sovereign. Of the authority of God, thus requiring us to imitate his perfections, conscience is the witness. In respect to the obligation resting on the creatures, its appeal is to the sovereign will of God, as the ultimate law, entitled to our highest reverence and implicit obedience. As to the propriety and beauty of the things thus enjoined, it points to the very nature of God, as infinitely excellent, in and of itself; and the ultimate standard of comparison, by which all moral excellence is to be determined. Thus, therefore, the single rule of righteousness, as attested by conscience and enforced upon men, is,—that God has a right to command, and the creatures are bound, universally and implicitly, to obey. Of this, the ultimate rule of morals, and of the principle whence it springs, we shall take further notice in another place.

It may be thought a fatal objection to our view, that, in the case of infants, conscience clearly indicates its presence, before it is possible that the mind should have grasped the idea of the existence of God. We might insist that there is no propriety in reasoning from phenomena which are characteristic of undeveloped faculties, in a fallen state. By the fall man has lost, in a great measure, that moral sense which apprehends the beauty of holiness. The principal function of conscience, as it remains in the unrenewed children of our apostate race, is, to attest the authority of God's law; rather than, to apprehend the beauty of his holiness. Viewing the subject in this light, the objection here stated involves no difficulty. The matter does not depend upon the recognition of the conventional terms and names by which God is designated in our theology. Were that the case, the objection would apply, as fully, in respect to the entire heathen world, as to the case of infants. But, in reference to

the present point, the essential conception involved in the idea of God, is that of infinite excellence and supreme authority. With this, is associated the corresponding sense of obligation; that is, of the duty of obedience. To talk of the action of conscience, where these apprehensions are not present, would be a contradiction in terms. In the earliest period of infant moral agency, the parent is the impersonation of that supremacy, which is thus intuitively felt to exist. As the powers expand, the finitude of the parent is gradually discovered, and the conception of the Supreme is borne upward to the infinite One, who sits in the heavens; or else takes refuge from his glorious excellence in some form of idolatry,—in the service of a false god, either imaginary or embodied.

The view here presented affords a ready solution of the difficulty which arises from the manner in which, in our fallen estate, the decisions of conscience are found to clash. The clearness of the moral sense has been so obscured, its light so darkened, by the corrupting power of sin, that it is no longer capable of appreciating the beauty of holiness, or distinguishing with any clearness or certainty, as to moral phenomena, the good from the evil. Whilst, however, conscience is thus lost to its highest honours and noblest function, it still retains the indelible impress of the rightful sovereignty of God. Its decisions are always consistent, on the question whether God ought to be obeyed. The only diversity is in respect to what he has commanded. Once settle this point,—and, however the apostate nature of man may rebel, the answer of conscience is unequivocal. The challenge of the apostles to the rulers of Israel will find a true response in the heart of the most reprobate:—"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."—Acts iv. 19.

In Adam, the dictates of conscience were infallible. The law of God was written thereon. That such was the case, appears from the terms in which Paul speaks of its traces still visible among the heathen world:—"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the





work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."—Rom. ii. 14, 15. When was this law inscribed on the hearts of the gentile world, unless, in the creation of man? This is further evinced, by the terms in which God, through Jeremiah, promises to restore his chosen people from the ruin of the fall, and the condemnation of a broken covenant:—"This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts."—Jer. xxxi. 33. When the ten commandments were given from Mount Sinai, they were at first engraven by the finger of God on tablets of stone; and, these being broken by Moses, upon occasion of Israel's idolatry with the golden calf, the law was again written on stone, by the hand of a mediator, Moses, (Gal. iii. 19,) under the direction of God. (Ex. xxxiv. 27, 28.) In these transactions, were typified, the original inscription on the heart of man in his creation, his transgression and breach of it, and the divine purpose to restore it again, by the agency of that great Prophet, like unto Moses, (Deut. xviii. 15-19,) whom God designed to raise up; and of whose mission and work the prophet Jeremiah speaks in the above-cited passage.

In fact, we must either admit that the law was inscribed in the heart of man, in his creation, or accept the alternative, that he is forever independent of every law, and free to follow the irresponsible determinations of his own will. If, for one instant, he existed without law, he possessed, for that instant, sole and irresponsible sovereignty over himself,—an independence of all superior control. How, then, could the true and righteous God assume towards him an attitude of authority, which, by the terms of the statement, did not exist? If man was not, already, by the necessity of his being, under the law of God, there could be no room for God's dealing with him in the terms of authority, by which he imposed upon him conditions of life and a penalty of death, in that transaction, subsequent to his creation, which respected the tree of knowledge. In other words, if man was not, in his very creation, subjected to the law of God, his original,

native and essential attitude is that of perfect, unconditional and inalienable liberty. Enthroned in supremacy over his own being and actions,—he is a god; and Jehovah, by the act of creating him, broke the pillars of his own throne, and set an impassable bound to his own empire. No longer supreme and alone, he shares dominion with man!

The reader may, at the first glance, think these conclusions unwarranted by the premises; and suppose, that even although it be assumed that, in the first hours of Adam's existence, he was subject to no law, yet, as a creature, he was bound to obey his Creator's will, as soon as it was ascertained. Let us allow for a moment the correctness of this reasoning, and see what it involves. Adam has remained for a season in the supposed state of unlimited independence. But now his Creator draws near, and announces to him a law, which is to govern his whole being, and control all his actions; and we have agreed, that, by virtue of his creature relation to God, he is under obligation at once to bow in obedience to the law thus revealed. But does Adam discover in himself a consciousness of this native obligation to obey God? Does he by nature know God, as his Creator; and his own relations to him, as a creature and a subject? If he does not, the obligation, which is supposed to rest upon him, must be altogether nugatory. It can neither enforce obedience, nor condemn transgression. For a knowledge of the lawgiver, and of the relations upon which the duty of obedience depends, is essential, as the first element in any obligation binding the actions of an intelligent agent. On the other hand, it being admitted, as necessarily it must, that a consciousness of these things was natively in Adam, constituting the basis upon which rested the authority of God's subsequent requirements, this admission carries with it a negation of the possibility of Adam having been left for an instant to freedom from law. As a creature, he recognises an obligation resting upon him; which, being founded in his creature relation, is parallel with his existence, mature with the first pulsation of life within him;—an obligation to conform to the law of God, as soon as revealed. But what is this; if it be not the very law itself? In what more comprehensive





and specific terms can the moral law be stated, than that it requires supreme reverence and obedience to God? This comprehends, in terms, the first table of the decalogue, and involves the second. If it be a duty to reverence and obey God, then it is also a duty to love our fellow-creatures, and respect their rights and happiness; as they are God's creatures, and possess those rights and that happiness by his gift.

But this is only a partial view of the case. Whilst conscience attested the duty of obedience to God, the particular form in which the divine authority was asserted to and by it, was that of the requirement to imitate the divine perfections, which were perceived by the moral sense. And since God's nature is love, and all his dealings proclaim this perfection as that which is especially set forth for the imitation of the creatures, the whole duty of man was thus set before him, in terms readily applicable to all the relations of life, whether to God or the creatures. Thus, it was the one and exalted office of conscience to proclaim and honour the holiness and sovereignty, and enforce the law, of God. With wakeful vigilance its approving smile greeted every act of holy obedience. Its stern and uncompromising frown awaited and condemned the first deed of transgression, the first thought of sin.

The other element in Adam's moral nature, was his will. The faculties already described—the reason, and conscience—were

designed to give him cognizance of things as they are.

§ 10. *The Will.* But the knowledge thus imparted was to the end, that he should occupy becoming relations to the things thus known. The recognition and embrace of these relations is the office of the will. The word, will, is sometimes used to designate the act of volition; and sometimes, the power that wills. It is in the latter sense that we here employ it. Its phenomena take their rise in the relations, congenial or the reverse, between man's powers and external things;—relations with which, in his creation, Adam was clothed. Thus, for example, his nature was characterized by an aptitude for certain classes of physical sensations, which, when they occur, are therefore embraced with an aptendency, which we recognise by the designation, pleasurable.

Others, on the contrary, on account of their uncongeniality to the nature, occasion necessary and involuntary repugnance, and are stigmatized as disagreeable or painful. Adam's soul, itself holy, found, in holiness and the Holy One, a correspondence with his own moral nature, which induced the going forth to them of his affections, in emotions of desire and love. To his nature, thus attuned to harmony with that of God, sin appeared in its true aspect of utter loathsomeness, inducing necessary rejection and disgust. The relations of affinity and disagreement, thus exemplified, were impressed on Adam's nature, when he was made; and all his faculties and powers, were placed in normal attitude, in respect to the various objects of these relations. These comprehended all departments of the creation, and all spheres of being, relation and action,—physical, intellectual and moral;—all things towards which he was designed by his Creator to sustain any kind of active relation. The multitude of appetites and affections, which belong to man's nature, are these affinities, realized to the consciousness. The will is the soul viewed as a cause, acting under their control and guidance.

What is here said, in respect to the relations out of which the phenomena of the will originate, is implied in man's investiture with powers. A power which should have no appropriate object,—an energy which should have no sphere assigned for its normal action, no proportionate end to be accomplished by it,—would be an absurdity, such as can have no place in the works of that only wise God, who has made nothing in vain. Thus, the affection of love has appropriate action toward the attributes and persons of the blessed Trinity;—hatred, toward sin and Satan; and so, of each attribute and power of body and soul. The attitude of these powers may be normal, or the reverse. The aptencies or affinities may be in such an order and direction, as to fulfil the end for which they were given; or, on the contrary, in such, as directly to oppose that end. The attitude of the soul may be such as, spontaneously and with unfailing certainty, to act love supreme toward God. Or it may be such, that this affection shall flow in the opposite direction; and, instead thereof, the blessed One be visited with spontaneous hate. But, what-



ever be the attitude of these powers of man's nature, his actions universally originate in, and are, in every respect, determined by, them. Hence it is evident, that, as these are, so must his will and his actions be. His actions are the effects of his will,—the exponents of his nature. The will is the soul, disposed to the active embrace of the affinities which it realizes. It is the nature, viewed in the light of its tendency to give expression to the aptitudes which it intuitively feels.

In discussions respecting the will, a great deal is usually said, about the influence of motives, in determining its action. Ed-

§ 11. *Nature of motives.* wards has much on this point; but entirely fails to bring out the fundamental fact, that, at last, it is

the soul itself which endows the motive with the character in which it appears;—that it is the nature of the soul which induces it to look upon this object with a complacency or repugnance, which gives it the position of a motive; whilst it regards another with indifference. So, it is declared by the apostle, with respect to temptations to sin:—"Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin."—James i. 14, 15. To the same effect is the testimony of our Saviour:—"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."—Matt. xv. 19. When the covetous desires his neighbour's goods, it is not the coveted object that creates the criminal wish; but the corrupt heart. The principle of action is the heart of the agent. The nature of the transgressor is the cause of his sins; and those external things which are designated as motives are merely the objects, in view of which the perverted nature finds occasion to reveal itself, as it is,—corrupt. It is not the unhallowed suggestion that imparts the impulse to the soul, and impels the will; but the soul of the corrupt finds the suggestion of sin congenial to its own instincts; and therefore embraces it.

Not only does Edwards ignore this principle,—he assumes ground altogether inconsistent with it. He scouts at the assertion that "motives and excitements to the action of the will are the passive ground or reason of that action; . . . which," says

he, "is a remarkable phrase; than which, I presume, there is none more unintelligible and void of distinct and consistent meaning in all the writings of Duns Scotus or Thomas Aquinas."\* He assumes the only alternative to lie between the Arminian self-determining power, and the efficient influence of motives, acting as external forces, controlling the will. So far as we can discover, Edwards does not anywhere recognise the distinctive nature of the soul as an efficient cause of the choices of the will. He assumes the existence of but two possible causes, to one or other of which all acts of the will are to be referred. Either, according to him, they are caused by the efficiency of external motives, impelling the will to action; or, they are produced by a preceding act of the will or choice,—the latter view involving the absurdity of a series of volitions without beginning. In this failure of Edwards to recognise the nature of the soul as itself the cause of its volitions, we have the occasion of the harsh and necessarian character of his philosophy, which is so inconsistent with the teachings of consciousness, and the tendency of which is so evidently antinomian and fatalistic. The immediate and inevitable effect of any system which locates the cause of volition or choice elsewhere than in the moral nature of the agent, is, to abrogate the law, and terminate responsibility. It is because volitions and actions flow from within, with entire independence of any external force, that men are held responsible at the bar of God.

On this subject we appropriate the argument of the venerated Alexander:—"The whole force which governs man is within and proceeds from himself. External objects are in themselves inert. They exert no influence; no power emanates from them. The only power and influence which they can possibly have over any man, they derive from the active principles of his nature. We are, indeed, accustomed in popular language to say, that external objects excite and inflame the mind; but in philosophical accuracy they are but the passive objects on which the affections and desires of the mind fasten; and their whole power of moving to action depends upon the strength of the inward affections

\* Edwards on the Will, part ii. § 10.





of the soul. To render this perfectly plain to every mind, it will only be necessary to attend to a few familiar illustrations.

"To a man who is under the influence of hunger or thirst, bread and water are said, when seen, greatly to excite him; so that he is strongly impelled to appropriate these objects to the craving wants of his nature. But every one sees at once that both the bread and the water are merely passive objects on which the appetite fixes. The real force which impels to action, is not, therefore, the external object, but the inward desire which is in the soul itself. For, where no appetite of hunger or thirst exists, the bread and water, however presented and urged upon the sense, produce no effect; there is no motive to action experienced. Take another case. A man comes into a room where lies a pile of gold. Avarice urges him to seize the beloved object and appropriate it to himself. Two desires, or motives, counteract the tendency of avarice: one is, a sense of duty, or regard to the dictate of conscience, which he knows ought to be obeyed; the other is, regard to reputation, or the good opinion of men. Between these two antagonistical principles there must, of course, be a conflict. If avarice be strong and the power of conscience and desire of the good opinion of men be comparatively weak, the consequence will be that the man will put forth his hand and take the gold; and at the same time will feel conscious that he is doing wrong. But if conscience be fully awake, and especially if a love of moral excellence and a hatred of iniquity have a place in his mind, this motive alone will be sufficient to induce him to reject at once the thought of appropriating what belongs to another. In this case, it is evident that the gold on the table is altogether passive: there is no secret emanation from the inert metal. The whole power of gold to seduce the mind to evil depends on the strength of the principle of avarice within; and, in a mind rightly constituted, or under the influence of good moral dispositions, it could never so prevail as to induce the person to do an unlawful act for the sake of obtaining it. From these cases it is evident that a man is not governed by any influence from without or separate from himself; but that the true spring of his actions

lies in his own inclinations and will, external things having no other influence than as they furnish objects suited to his appetites and other desires."\*

Edwards asserts that "whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or viewed as good; nor has it any tendency to invite or engage the election of the soul, in any further degree than it appears such." "It must be observed in what sense I use the term *good*; namely, as of the same import with *agreeable*. To appear good to the mind, as I use the phrase, is the same as to *appear agreeable*, or *seem pleasing* to the mind. Certainly nothing appears inviting and eligible to the mind, or tending to engage its inclination and choice, considered as evil or disagreeable; nor, indeed, as indifferent, and neither agreeable nor disagreeable. But if it tends to draw the inclination and move the will, it must be under the notion of that which suits the mind. And therefore that must have the greatest tendency to attract and engage it, which as it stands in the mind's view suits it best, and pleases it most; and in that sense is the greatest apparent good: to say otherwise, is little if any thing short of a direct and plain contradiction."† The tenor of the whole connection shows that by the phrase, "that which suits the mind," is here meant that which promises it pleasure. Thus in the same section Edwards proceeds to show what it is that makes an object proposed to choice agreeable. This he presents under two general heads. The first is,—*"The apparent nature and circumstances of the object;"* namely, *"That which appears in the object, which renders it beautiful and pleasurable, or deformed and irksome, to the mind, viewing it as it is in itself;"*—"The apparent degree of pleasure or trouble attending the object, or the consequence of it;"—and *"The apparent state of the pleasure or trouble that appears, with respect to distance of time; being either nearer or farther off."* His second general head is,—*"The manner of view,"*—as, *"With respect to the degree of judgment, or firmness of assent,*

\* Alexander's Moral Science, p. 109.

† Edwards on the Will, part 1. § 2.



with which the mind judges the pleasure to be future;"—and "With respect to the degree of the idea of the future pleasure." Thus do all these particular reasons, resolve themselves into the one proposition,—that the pleasure anticipated is the motive to the exertion of the will. But here is overlooked the primary and fundamental question,—What is it, which renders a given object pleasurable or disagreeable, attractive or repulsive, to the mind? Certainly it is nothing in the object in itself; for, if so, a given object, presented to a thousand persons, would produce precisely the same effect in each instance. But, on the contrary, we find that the effect is as various, as the diversities of mental constitution possessed by the persons to whom it is presented. The reason, then, why an object is attractive to a given person, is not any thing in the object, absolutely; but the fact that the nature of the person is such as to hold a complementary relation to it,—the object, corresponds to the disposition of the person.

But further, we object altogether to the assumption that it is, in any sense of those words, the good or pleasure which we apprehend to be in objects, which induces the will to embrace them. In what conceivable sense is it true that blaspheming devils and reprobate men are impelled to vent their curses, by any conception of good or anticipation of pleasure in them? Were this idea true, it would follow, that man's endowment with a free will constituted him necessarily and purely a selfish being; pleasure his only motive, the gratification of self his highest and only possible end. A little careful reflection will, we are persuaded, satisfy any one, that, even where pleasure is anticipated in an act of volition, it is not as pleasure that it presents its primary aspect to the mind. In fact, the first cause of volition, in every case, is some aptitude which the mind intuitively realizes, toward the object. And it is this aptitude met and satisfied in the object, which in certain cases, but not invariably, induces a sense of pleasure;—a sense, in the order of nature, coincident with, and not the cause of, the volition. Thus, a spirit of hell finds an affinity in his perverted nature to curses against God. Yet, certainly, whilst he yields to the controlling power of his fearful and atrocious hate, he does not in any sense, nor

to any the slightest degree, look upon this as having a single feature of good, natural or moral, or one element of pleasure, either present or prospective. He sees it and knows it as what it is,—evil and only evil, and fraught only with added misery and remorse to himself. His curses spring not from any conception of the act as good or pleasurable, from any action of reason or conscience; but in despite of both, and by virtue of the perverted attitude of the soul itself, which finds the congenial play of its powers in evil and not in good. Pleasure is a sensation arising from normal action or relations of the powers; from the fruition or satisfying of an original and unperturbed aptitude, physical or spiritual. Man's moral nature having been constructed and all its attributes conferred, after the likeness and in adaptation to the service and glory of the holy and blessed God, and his physical constitution having been designed and endowed as the servant of the soul, in fulfilling this its great end; it follows that the position proper to the whole man is in harmony with the nature of God, and in ministration to his glory. Abnormal phenomena could, therefore, never occur, either in body or soul, until man became apostate from God; nor from any cause except that apostasy, which constituted the assumption of an abnormal attitude by the soul, and caused the resulting perversion of the bodily powers; and, from the consequent judicial attitude assumed by God, withholding his smile, the fountain of pleasure, and inflicting his curse. And since it is of the very nature of holiness to produce happiness, and of sin to produce misery, it follows that pleasure can never be realized in depraved and sinful exercises, except so far as normal action or relations of the physical or intellectual powers may occur in connection with the sin; which is often the case among men in the flesh, but never in hell. Hence, to speak of beings perfect in holiness, and yet unhappy, or, utterly unholy and apostate from their proper attitude and relations, and yet capable of enjoyment, is a contradiction in terms. It is, therefore, manifest, that appetite, and pleasure anticipated, are by no means interchangeable terms. Only when the appetite is normal is the result enjoyment. Otherwise, its intensity is but intenser misery.





The freedom which we have attributed to the will, from the efficient control of external objects operating as motives, implies its independence of any authoritative dominion of reason and conscience. Not that it and these are necessarily or originally at variance. Their proper and original attitude is that of perfect harmony. But, as the will does not exercise any direct control over the testimony of these, the intelligencers of the soul; so, neither do they exert any controlling force to determine the action of the will, to compel it in one direction or another. The will is, in fact, the organ of the imperial power in man, subject to no law but the soul's nature, and consulting no authority but the constitution of that nature. Its decrees are sovereign and final; against which reason may argue and conscience protest; but which can neither be modified nor repealed by their authority. Hence that familiar phenomenon of the human heart, which is expressed in the well-known confession of Seneca:—"Video meliora, proboque; deteriora sequor." Reason sees the right, and conscience attests it, but the will embraces the wrong. Nor is the remedy to be found in the subordination of the will to the other powers; but in the reconciliation of the nature to harmony with the nature of God, the norm of excellence.

That the will is not to be controlled by the reason and conscience,—that it is, with them, an independent and co-ordinate power,—will be made evident by a few suggestions.

1. Such a constitution of man's nature, as had subordinated the will to the domination of the other attributes, would have rendered the fall impossible. It does not admit of a moment's question, that the reason and conscience of Adam, in his unfallen state, pointed infallibly to the truth and duty. If the original and normal attitude of the will was that of subjection to their control, man could have willed nothing but what was true and right. It would have been a natural impossibility that he should have sinned. If it should be said, that the fall was consequent upon the will usurping the sovereignty, and casting off allegiance to reason and conscience; it will be necessary to weigh well the meaning of the language. However justifiable its use in rhetori-

cal discourse, it involves, if taken literally, some things which are entirely inadmissible. It would reduce us to the conclusion, that, by the fall, the very substance of the soul itself was changed. For, as already intimated, when we speak of the will, conscience and reason, we really mean nothing else than the soul itself, as it is capable of action in these various ways. They being therefore of the very substance of the soul, their relations to each other are characteristics or phenomena of that substance. Hence, to say that one of these powers, which was originally subordinate, has usurped the mastery, is, to suppose that the substance of the soul itself was by the fall transformed,—that a substance which was, so to speak, controllingly and characteristically rationalistic, had in some way ceased to be so, and become wilful. This is, in fact, to pretend that which God made to have been destroyed, and something of a different nature originated without a cause, and placed in its stead. Moreover, the usurpation here attributed to the will, if admitted, is the very apostasy itself,—the very thing to be accounted for.

2. Any being in whom the will should be subordinate to, and under the control of, the moral sense and reason, would thereby be deprived of the essential characteristic of moral agency. Such a position of the moral powers implies that truth and righteousness have in themselves, apart from any correspondence of nature in the agent, a power of immediate operation upon the active faculties of the soul. By virtue of the mere fact that righteousness is right, the soul would be constrained passively to conform to it, in its actions; even although the attributes of the soul were alien from it, and in harmony with evil; just as the plate of the photographic artist passively receives the traces which the rays of light make upon it. Man's actions would thus be under the control of a necessity, not moral, but natural; and, thus necessarily conforming to the right, would be without any title to the meed of righteousness; since he could not do wrong, even if his soul were utterly corrupt. Actions thus necessitated would have no more moral character than belongs to the water-wheel, which yields to the current that flows upon it; or the mirror, that faithfully reflects the features which the light traces





on its surface. There would be no election, and hence the idea of moral agency would be precluded. Thus should we have a moral monster, of such a constitution, that, whilst his whole nature might be in revolt from God, yet, under the mechanical control of reason and conscience, his actions would conform perfectly to the law of holiness; and it would be impossible for any being but the Searcher of hearts to perceive the reality. The alternative would be, either, that, in failing to punish, the Holy One should accept of the outward appearance instead of the heart; or that, in punishing, the infliction should be visited on beings who, to all created apprehension, would be as righteous as the white-robed throng before the throne; thus precluding any revelation of the holiness and justice of God.

3. Men are all conscious of such a freedom of will as is irreconcilable with the notion which we here oppose. In the ungodly, the will is habitually and consciously at variance with the truth and right. And, in the child of God, whilst this same perversity of will is often realized, it is felt, that even when the will, the reason and conscience are in unison, this is not because of any force exerted by the latter over the will; but because of a harmony subsisting between the new nature and the holiness and truth to which the other moral powers bear witness.

4. The manner in which arguments operate on the minds of men, is also conclusive of the freedom of will, which we here assert. It is not the expectation of any reasoner, who is at all acquainted with human nature, to influence the actions of men by appeals to pure reason, as such. Persuasions are indeed addressed to the understanding; but only because that is the channel of access to the nature, by which the will is determined. Hence it is, that those arguments which appeal to the light of pure reason, are seldom effectual; whilst such as address themselves to the dispositions of men's natures never fail of success. A public speaker shall lay down premises of incontrovertible truth, and thence trace his conclusions by the most rigorous application of the rules of logic and principles of reason; and yet utterly fail to move his audience. Another may start from premises which are palpably false, and proceed in a line of

argument which has no respect either to truth or reason; and yet bear his hearers with him in enthusiastic admiration and acquiescence. The former has studied the principles of truth, and the dictates of reason and conscience. The other, indifferent to these, has studied human nature. This is the field in which are tried and developed the skill of the pleader, whose business it is to operate on the minds of juries; and of the orator, who seeks to guide and control the populace. By these it is felt that, in order to success, the appeal must be to the peculiar appetites and propensities of the several individuals; and reason and conscience are no further addressed than as the nature of the party is supposed to be in harmony with them. In the variety of pleas employed on such occasions, the orator engages in a series of experiments, for the purpose of discovering and playing upon such notes as will arouse responsive chords in the hearts of his hearers. If they are attuned in harmony with the principles of truth and the laws of right, appeal is made to these. If the nature be debased, however clear may be the reason, and however faithful the conscience, it is in vain to appeal to them; and unless something is presented of an aspect congenial to the depraved heart, the man will be uninfluenced; his will remains unmoved. Nor is it inconsistent with this view that, in the preaching of the gospel, appeal is continually made to reason and conscience; since, contrary to natural causes, the convincing and saving result is wrought by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit, transforming the nature into the likeness of God and harmony with the claims of truth and the calls of duty.

5. Precisely here is that liberty which the Scriptures attribute to the sons of God. Says the beloved and loving John, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."—John iv. 18. Says Paul, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."—Rom. viii. 15. "Wherefore," says he again, "thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God, through Christ." "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ



hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. iv. 7; v. 1. Reason and conscience are servants of the law, demanding obedience to its precepts, and denouncing curses against transgression. The will is the minister of love, in him that has attained to liberty; putting forth its powers in accordance indeed with reason and conscience; yet not acting under their precept; but impelled by the affinity which the soul realizes toward holiness and the Holy One. And herein will consist the character of the holiness of the saints in heaven. There, the ardent affections will not be held in curb by tardy judgments issued from the tribunal of a written law. But the will, going eagerly forth on the wings of love, inspired by perception of the glorious beauty of God's holiness, will give continual expression to the instincts of the soul, attuned in harmony with the holy nature of God,—expression with which the other moral powers will ever harmonize. Thus, their holiness is not that of thoughts and deeds doled out by weight and measure, in conformity with an extrinsic rule; but, of affections and actions springing freely and spontaneously from natures conformed to that nature of the Holy One, from which the law is transcribed.

Freedom, or liberty, is defined by Edwards to consist in one's "being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing  
 § 13. *The Liberty* or conducting in any respect, as he wills." He hence  
*liberty defined.* concludes, that "to talk of liberty or the contrary, as belonging to the very will itself, is not to speak good sense; . . . for the will itself is not an agent that has a will: the power of choosing, itself, has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition or choice is the man or the soul, and not the power of volition itself. And he that has the liberty of doing according to his will, is the agent or doer who is possessed of the will; and not the will which he is possessed of." Edwards here evidently labours under a vague conception of the will as a limb or member of the soul,—something distinct from its substance,—instead of being, as it is, the very soul itself, viewed with respect to its capacity for putting forth the phenomena of volition. Hence, the distinction which he draws be-

tween freedom of the soul and freedom of will is altogether inconclusive and impertinent. Further, the statement is not what it purports to be,—a definition of liberty or freedom,—but a description of a free person. And it is this inadvertence, which leads Edwards to the conclusion, that freedom may not, in accuracy of speech, be attributed to the will:—"A free person is one who has power to do according to his will;—the will itself is not an agent possessed of a will;—therefore, freedom is not predicable of the will."

We greatly prefer the definition of another equally illustrious philosopher and theologian. "Long ago," says Leibnitz, "did Aristotle show, that in liberty there are two things,—spontaneity and election; and herein is our dominion over our own actions."\* Spontaneity and election,—wherever these coexist, there is liberty; whilst, on the other hand, should either of these be wanting, liberty is not predicable. Spontaneity implies that the action is not in itself necessary, nor produced by the efficiency of an external power; but has its cause intrinsically in the agent. Election implies the intelligent recognition of the alternatives of action and inaction, and of action in this or the other direction,—the power of conforming to either of the alternatives that may be selected,—and discrimination, among them, of that which conforms to the standard of reference, the nature of the agent. If this be a correct definition, the will is properly described as free.

But, whilst the will is thus free, it is by no means endowed with that liberty of indifference of which Arminians speak. Whilst it acts without constraint, it has not that power of contrary choice for which they contend. Its spontaneity is as determinate, and the precise manner of its action as certain, antecedently, as is that of gravitation, or the elective affinity of chemical elements. This follows from all that we have already said. If the action of the will be the expression of the elective affinities of the soul,—if it be, as we have endeavoured to show, actuated, not by external motives, but by the internal dispositions of the nature,—it will follow, that inasmuch as these are specific

\* Leibn. *Tentamina Theodiceæ*, part i. § 34.





and precise in their character and attitude, they will cause, in the will, action determinate and correspondent with them. Most emphatic to this purpose is the expostulation of Jesus with the Pharisees:—"O generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things."—Matt. xii. 34, 35; Thus the will is the faithful and only index to the soul. The reason and conscience tell what is truth, and what is duty,—what is the nature of God, and what he requires of man. The will proclaims what the man is;—whether in harmony with the other moral powers, or alien from them;—whether conformed to the holiness which he sees in God, or estranged from holiness, and enslaved to sin.

Thus was the soul of Adam endowed with an efficient force, constituting it a cause, the effects of which were correspondent with and expressive of its own nature,—a force independent of any power but God, and of which his will was the expression. As God is, in himself, the sole reason and cause of all his works, unimpelled and unrestrained, in the operation of his hand, by any thing but his own will,—the expression of the perfections of his nature,—so, Adam, by his endowment with freedom of will, was constituted in himself sole cause of all the phenomena of his moral agency, and all the actions of his life,—his self-active intellectual and moral nature their only reason and cause, and his free will its efficient executive. This investiture constituted one of the most striking and characteristic features of that likeness in which man was created.

Such was the moral constitution with which Adam was endowed:—consisting of a rational intelligence, which was a faithful mirror of truth,—a moral sense, which, taught by the law in the heart, was a perfect guide in the path of duty,—and a will, which, in the original estate of man, was in perfect unison with the others; and in every state, constitutes the index to the moral attitude of the soul, and gives effect to its aptitudes and affinities, whether holy or depraved. Adam's nature being formed

in the likeness of God, in righteousness and holiness, as we shall presently see, his will, responsive to it, was in perfect sympathy with the will of God. Placed thus in a native attitude of perfect harmony with all excellence, he was, moreover, endowed with an exalted and honourable freedom from any irresistible control. His nature, although holy, was not bound by any extraneous or forceful constraint to the throne of God. Those affinities of his soul which tended upward toward God were indeed invested with the predominance. But there were other aptitudes in his nature,—to self, the world, and the creatures;—aptitudes which were right in themselves, and, in their normal exercise, conducive to his happiness; but which, if they should gain the mastery, involved ruin to man. His holy dispositions must be cherished in order to confirmed supremacy; and watching and prayerfulness are necessary, lest the soul, heedless of its high calling, wander in devious paths, and become enslaved to grovelling and sensual things. "Man in his state of innocency had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it."\*

It has been intimated that knowledge of God and of his own relations to him, was essential to that obligation of obedience, *§ 14. Adam's* which is recognised in Adam. In fact, a knowledge of God, as the supreme and holy lawgiver, is necessarily implied, and lies at the foundation of our ideas of right and wrong,—the reference of our actions to a moral standard of judgment. And some knowledge, not only of God, but of the creatures,—of their several relations to each other, and to the Creator, and of his own relations to both,—was manifestly requisite in order to the intelligent performance of those duties which Adam owed them severally. Accordingly, that such knowledge constituted an element in the image which shone in him, appears from the language of Paul, describing its restoration in believers:—"Ye have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him."—Col. iii. 10. There can be, in the same nature, but one

\* Westminster Confession, ch. ix. 2.



image of the unchangeable God. It is here characterized by knowledge; and represented, not as an absolutely new creation, but the renewing of that, which, traced in creation, had been defaced by the fall. Knowledge therefore constituted one of the original endowments of Adam. This further appears, from that pregnant passage in the first chapter of Romans, in which Paul proves the ignorance and idolatry of the heathen world to be without excuse. Rom. i. 19-28:—"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse; because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. . . . Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." Observe that the whole design of the apostle's argument is, utterly to deprive every child of Adam of any resource in the fancy of self-righteousness, or the plea of ignorant and therefore excusable transgression; so as to prepare the way for the offer of free salvation to all. Accordingly, in the application of this very argument we find him asserting (ch. iii. 9, 10) "we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." See also the same chapter, vs. 20-23. The statements of the apostle must therefore be taken in as broad a sense as the conclusions which he draws. Here, then, is a knowledge comprehending all "that which may be known of God" by the creature;—a knowledge condemning each individual of the heathen world without exception; and therefore common to all, and not limited, as some would wish, to their philosophers and sages;—a knowledge originally in them, but now obscured and darkened by their wilful transgressions, and preference of darkness and ignorance; therefore not fully realized in them as

individuals, but referable rather to their nature, than to their persons;—a knowledge the date of which is "the creation of the world;" and the discoveries of which are based upon the intuitive sense that the universe must have an author, and that he must be Jehovah, the eternal God; and which the apostle in the next chapter identifies with "the law written in the heart." How can the conclusion be avoided, that this universal characteristic of man, which at once marks the dignity of his nature, and stigmatizes the heinousness of his ignorance and sins, had its fountain and fulness in Adam,—that what may be known of God was manifest in him,—that God showed it to him, so that by him it was clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made?

But, contrary to all this, by a popular commentator, Adam is described as "the first man, just looking on a world of wonders; unacquainted with law, and moral relations, and the effect of transgression."\* Other New Haven writers speak in a similar style. The sentiment is at least as old as Socinus; who, in proof of Adam's ignorance, cited the fact that he did not at first know that he was naked! "That is," says a quaint old writer, "he did not certainly know whether his own skin was his own or not; and was so silly he could not tell whether he had any thing over it!"

But is this true? Then must we go still further, and assert that the trees of the garden were no more than thrifty shoots, bearing only the latent germs of future fruitfulness; and that the animals that received their names from Adam were creatures of powers as yet undeveloped, and faculties unmaturing. If it be said that the necessity of the case required that the vegetable creation should be mature and fruit-bearing, in order to supply food for the inferior animals and man, and that for other reasons it was equally requisite that the animal tribes should enter on the stage in maturity of natural faculties; we reply that in reference to Adam there was in the nature of the case a still higher, a moral, necessity that he should not come forth from his Creator's hand a monster instead of a man; hiding under the

\* Barnes on the Epistle to the Romans, 1st ed. p. 116, (on ch. v. 12.)





disguise of mature physical proportions the intellect of a simpleton and the soul of a child. Not only does there appear a moral necessity that Adam should possess full maturity, in the capacities and furniture of his mind and soul, as well as of his body; but we have ample evidence that such maturity was his endowment. Whence, otherwise, did he possess the capacity to name the beasts, and exercise dominion over them, as they were brought before him, and subjected to his authority? From the narrative of that transaction, in connection with its sequel, the introduction of Eve, and her name, given by Adam in a manner implying an intuitive knowledge of her origin, nature and relation to him; it appears that by a divine inspiration,—nay, by the very inspiration which constituted him a living soul, Adam was endowed with knowledge of all that it was requisite he should know, in order to fulfilling the duties required of him, and exercising the dominion which was bestowed upon him. How else shall we understand the providence of God, by which he was immediately placed in relations so various, so complicated and so responsible? As a subject of God, held to a responsibility comprehensive of his being, and holding his very existence at stake;—as a social being bound in the marriage tie;—as a master, possessing the earth, and ruling the inferior tribes;—as a necessitous and dependent being, tilling and dressing the garden, and drawing thence his supplies of food,—he occupied relations rendering absolutely necessary a considerable acquaintance with the laws of nature; and a full understanding of the moral law, in both its tables, of moral relations, in all their aspects, and of the results of obedience and transgression, in all their bearings and extent. Nor do we find reason to modify these conclusions by any thing recorded in the history of Adam. In the blessing passed upon him at his creation;—in the designation of his food;—in his introduction to the garden, and the precept respecting the tree;—in the presentation of the animals and birds;—in the interview with the tempter, the transgression and the curse,—his just and gracious Maker always assumes Adam to understand his relations, duties and responsibilities; and Adam responds universally and unequivocally to this supposition.

We have said, that, by the very inspiration which made Adam a living soul, he was endowed with the knowledge requisite to his situation. That such was the faith of holy men of old, see the language of Elihu, in his remarkable apology for interposing between Job and his three friends:—"I said, Days shall speak, and multitude of years shall teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." "My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly. The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."—Job xxxii. 7, 8; xxxiii. 3, 4. It will not be supposed, that Elihu here claims that plenary inspiration by which the prophets spake. Plainly, his language points to the manner in which Adam was created, and life imparted by the Spirit of God. In this, he finds an argument of intelligence and knowledge, authorizing his claim to a hearing, in the presence of the patriarchs, to whom he justified the ways of God to man.

Another line of argument will lead us to conclusions equally clear and satisfactory, in regard to the original furniture of Adam's intellect. Words and language are mere vehicles for conveying ideas; and this by the associating and combining of ideas already present in the recipient mind. Except as they serve this end, they possess no value, and exert no power. The narrative of Moses shows language to have originated with God,—its first use being the instruction of the newly created man, in his relations, duties and privileges, toward God and the creatures, the law and the curse. Those communications assume to address themselves to a knowledge and intelligence in Adam of the highest order and widest extent; and if these were wanting, the language in which he was addressed could have conveyed no more sense to his understanding than would the Hebrew of Moses to the mind of an untutored child.

It is further to be noticed, that the sense of language is not diverse, but one; that is to say,—a given word or single statement, occurring in a communication from an intelligent mind, is the expression of a single and specific idea, which has a precise





definition in the mind of the author. However comprehensive the idea, however many elements it may contain, it is conceived as a unit, and as such imparted, through the channel of words. It is hence apparent, that language misses its proper office just so far as it fails to convey to the recipient mind the precise ideas, in all their elements and scope, of which it is the symbol in the mind of the speaker. Two things, which are diverse from each other, are not one and the same thing. If, therefore, the language used in any given case fails to exhibit a precise copy of the idea designed, it may serve certain valuable ends, by means of the inaccurate and partial intelligence which it conveys; yet to the proper purposes of its mission it is a failure. It does not in the least militate against the correctness of this position, to urge that it involves the conclusion that human speech always fails of its end; inasmuch as men neither can, nor hope to, attain to the supposed accuracy in the communication of their thoughts. The catastrophe of the fall has not left the understanding unscathed; and the language of the apostle is applicable, not merely to the things which were immediately before him, when he says, that "now we see through a glass darkly." "Now we know in part." Not only so, but however defective the skill with which man, even in his unfallen state, might have employed the instrumentality of speech, no such deficiency can be presumed of God, even in communication with his most imperfect creatures.

To apply these principles to the present purpose:—Here is Adam, with intellect and soul, just born of the creative Word; presenting a pure and spotless tablet, ready to receive and radiate the softest tint, the most delicate line, traced there by the Spirit of God. Here is God, the maker of that tablet, the Creator of that soul, about to inscribe upon it communications embracing in their scope every relation which Adam sustained, every duty required of him, and every privilege he enjoyed;—communications fraught with results, infinite for weal or woe, not to himself only, but to myriads of immortal intelligences, his seed;—results, all whose infinite weight was involved in his clear and intelligent apprehension of the things addressed to him. Here, too, is the Holy Spirit, the official interpreter between the Triune

God, whose messenger he was, and man, in whose bosom he dwelt. I ask, Had the language of God to Adam defined and specific meaning? Was the channel of speech wisely constructed and employed? Was it truly interpreted by the Spirit of Holiness? Was a faithful copy inscribed on the tablet of Adam's understanding? Or, was it defective and false? In short, could the Creator convey to the mind of Adam the precise idea which he might wish to communicate? And, if he could thus communicate, did he choose any thing short of this? And let not him who shall essay to frame answers to these questions, charge God foolishly. For the whole issue here is with God. Himself the author of the ideas to be imparted, of the relations to be explained, and the laws to be enforced;—Himself the former of man's soul, which was the passive recipient of the communications; and the inventor of language, the channel of intercourse;—and the Holy Ghost the agent of communication,—if the ideas inscribed on man's heart were not the very same which were comprehended in the language of God, whose is the defect? Let it not be said, that Adam understood, indeed; but partially and obscurely. Whatever the measure of his understanding, it was given by the Holy Spirit. Whatever the defectiveness of his apprehension,—however obscure the image of the truth on his mind,—what he saw was what the Spirit wrote; as he saw it, so was it traced by the Holy Ghost. Here then have we the Creator addressing the ear of man in words definite and clear. And does the Spirit interpret them to his soul, in terms vague and obscure? God points out in words of weightiest import the path of duty and happiness, and the way of sin and death. Does the Spirit of God so translate these revelations, as to leave him ignorant wherein duty consists,—what is the happiness to be sought, the evil to be avoided, or the ruin to be shunned; "unacquainted with law, and moral relations, and the effect of transgression"? His posterity now read the same words which were addressed to him, and find no difficulty in apprehending their meaning; whilst they trace in them the vestiges of an innocence long since lost; and the beacons of a ruin now too fearfully realized. And shall we tolerate for one moment the idea, that he



to whom they were addressed, upon whose right understanding and correspondent conduct the destiny of unborn millions was suspended, was left in ignorance;—an ignorance enstamped on his heart by the very Spirit of light and truth, by means of the words of knowledge and life;—an ignorance insurmountable by man, and therefore innocent; disqualifying him for the performance of duty, and, by parity of reasoning, at the same time freeing him from the responsibility of transgression? For if he did not, and could not, know what God required, he could not by justice be held to account! We therefore conclude, that whatever communications were addressed to Adam by his Creator, were comprehended by him in the very sense, and to the whole intent, with which they were uttered by God.

Nor is it of any pertinence against this conclusion, to insist that it implies a degree of knowledge beyond the capacities of any creature; because the words of God must all possess relations, and have a comprehension, which is only within the capacity of Him who is perfect in knowledge. Words taken severally are not designed as descriptions of the things represented by them, but as indices suggestive of those things. When, for example, we assert that Adam understood the threatening,—“In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,”—we do not thereby imply, that he so understood the nature of the penalty of death, as fully to comprehend and exhaust its significance, as eternity shall unfold it. Such is not the manner in which language is ever employed. I may clearly understand that the word, death, means the vindictive wrath of God, without pretending to apprehend the whole burden which that wrath will inflict. Every one will see the absurdity of pretending that the sentence,—“God is a Spirit,”—does not convey a clear, intelligible and specific idea to the mind; because no one can comprehend God, or know, in a complete and exhaustive sense, what a spirit is.

Having reached this point, let the reader turn to the book of Genesis, and examine the narrative there given, of the several communications addressed to Adam before his fall; and of his language and conduct during the same period. Subject these

passages, word by word, to the strictest rules of grammatical interpretation, and,—whether we adopt the opinion that in his very creation Adam was endowed with all requisite knowledge, or, that the word and works of God were clothed with an illuminating power, so that each word and each fact conveyed to his mind all that antecedent information which is presupposed in it,—the conclusion remains unavoidable, flowing from the whole scope of the record and each element in its detail, that Adam was gifted with a fund of knowledge sweeping over the fields of natural science; comprehending the productive powers of the earth, and the modes of their development; the nature and habits, the qualities and uses, of herbs, plants and trees, of fish, animals and birds; and, in the sphere of moral science, knowing as perfectly as finite mind can know the infinite God, as the triune Maker, Lord and Lawgiver of all; understanding his own relations to God, to his wife and their seed, to the world and the creatures; knowing the law alike in the rectitude of its authority, the comprehensiveness and excellence of its precepts, and the righteousness and terribleness of its curse; and appreciating the full excellence of the terms of the covenant and the richness of its grace.

The knowledge, moreover, which we thus discover in Adam, was infinitely superior to any possible present attainments of his fallen posterity, in respect to the fact that with them there is no truth, in any even the exactest science, the glory of which is not obscured, in their reception of it, by the intermixture of error, so that, truly and strictly speaking, they, even in the proudest achievements of science, at last know nothing as it really is. On the contrary, the soul of Adam being undefiled with sin and unclouded with falsehood, and the Spirit of God his only teacher, whatever he learned, of God, his law and his works, was learned in its virgin purity and perfect truth.

Such are the conclusions to which we are led;—conclusions inevitable, unless we are prepared to accept the alternative, that the pure words of God were to Adam mere empty and unintelligible sounds, mocking his unconscious ignorance and imbecility by a semblance of instruction which they failed to impart, and





by presupposing in him a knowledge which he could not possess;—that, unable to understand either the extent of his privileges or the nature of his obligations, he was precluded from using the one, and incompetent to sustain the other;—that, thus incapable of perfect obedience, he was irresponsible for the failure; and that, by consequence, his fall demands our pity, rather than detestation, and the calamities thence entailed on him and his seed, whether viewed as consequential or penal, whether measured by that eternal wrath which God's word proclaims, or limited to temporal evils, as false philosophy teaches, so far from displaying or being consistent with infinite holiness and rectitude in man's Lawgiver and Judge, are the climax of injustice and oppression! Forbid it, every pious heart!

Righteousness and holiness constituted additional elements in Adam's likeness to God; as appears from the language of Paul to the Ephesians, in which he exhorts them to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 24. It has been disputed wherein consists the precise distinction here held forth between righteousness and holiness, or whether they are not pleonastic repetitions of the same idea. Without attempting any very rigid discrimination, it may, however, be stated, that righteousness is that aspect of moral excellence which looks toward the law, and consists, therefore, in conformity to its precepts; whilst holiness, in a creature, has its aspect toward God, and consists in adoring delight in his perfections, and in conformity of the affections and powers to his likeness. Adam's original righteousness consisted in the predisposition of his nature to an entire acquiescence in the will of God as sovereign,—to a free conformity with whatever God required of him, and a perfect symmetry and harmony of all the powers of his being, adapted to the law and ready to fulfil all its precepts;—a righteousness, this, inherent in his nature, and which developed itself in works of perfect obedience, the instant he entered upon the sphere of action. His holiness consisted in a conformity of all his affections and dispositions to the likeness of God as the Holy One, and an ardour of the whole being toward him as

the consummate excellence;—a native temper which induced "an acquiescing in God as the supreme truth, revering him as the most dread majesty, loving him as the chief and only good, and, for the sake of him, holding dear whatever his mind, divinely taught, dictated to him to be acceptable, like to and expressive of his perfections; in fine, whatever contributed to acquiring an intimate and immediate union with him; delighting in the fellowship of his God which was now allowed him; panting for further communion; raising himself thereto by the creatures, as so many steps; and, finally, celebrating the most unspotted holiness of God, as the most perfect transcript of him, according to which he was to strive with his utmost might to frame himself and his actions."\*

The original righteousness of Adam is distinctly asserted by the Preacher:—"Lo, this only have I found, that God made man (*Heb.* Adam) upright; but they have sought out many inventions,"—Eccl. vii. 29; language equally relevant to our purpose, though it be admitted that it is not designed of Adam individually, but of the race as generically embodied in his person, in whom alone it has ever been upright. His righteousness is also incontrovertibly implied in the attestation to his character uttered at the time of his creation. He, being made a moral agent, "the image and glory of God," (1 Cor. xi. 7,) was designed as the ruler, whose office it should be to control and use the other creatures to the service and glory of the Creator, whilst displaying in his own person the brightness of the Creator's perfect image. If, then, the approving decision, by which God, as it was formed, pronounced each creature "good," was a pledge of their several fitness for the spheres to which they were assigned,—the final attestation, passed after the creation of man had crowned the whole, upon a survey of all the now completed work, set the same seal of excellence to his nature, in view of the station to which he was destined. "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good."—Gen. i. 31. Such language is an infallible pledge of Adam's perfect fitness for the place and office for which he was created,

\* Witsius' *Economy of the Covenants*, book I. ch. II. § 15.



as the image of God, the possessor of the world and the ruler of the creatures;—a fitness to which rectitude of nature and life, and holiness of heart, were undeniably essential.

Another element of the image of God in Adam, was his position, in the dominion of the world and the creatures; and that endowment of authority which they recognised in his person and voice. To man, at present, all is in revolt, the result of his revolt from God. The elements assail him. The earth gives thorns and thistles for his toil. The treacherous air instils death in his veins; and the animal tribes lie in wait for his blood, or fly from his presence with distrust and dread. But it was not so at the beginning. For Adam all were made, and to him assigned in the decree for his creation. The world's whole structure was framed for his convenience, and all its creatures placed under his hand in a dominion, the only limit of which was the ultimate sovereignty of the infinite Maker. The elements were in his alliance; and the earth brought in tribute the fatness of its virgin soil, and the spontaneous abundance of its luscious fruits; whilst around him carolled the feathered tribes, and before him trooped the animal throng, yielding loyal allegiance and fearless trust.

"About them friking played  
All beasts of the earth, since wild; and of all chase,  
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;  
Sporting the lion romped, and in his paw  
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,  
Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,  
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed  
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent, sly,  
Insinuating, wove, with Gordian twine,  
His braided train, and of his fatal guile  
Gave proof unheeded."—*PARADISE LOST*, Book iv.

Thus have we traced the lineaments of the divine likeness which was in Adam, as he came from the hands of his Maker. He was surrounded by every circumstance which could serve to signalize and proclaim him the topstone and crown of the creation of God. "Created by the special council and care of the blessed

Trinity, he was made the end of all the creatures; they all for him; and, therefore, he last of all. He was, in a peculiar manner, formed to the glory of his Maker; as he who, of all the creatures, could recognise, celebrate and respond to the wisdom, power and goodness of the Creator; so that, without man, all else had been created in vain. He was an epitome and compendium of the universe; representing the spiritual world by his soul, and the corporeal by his body. His body was formed as it were by the very fingers of God; and hence was admirable in the elegant proportion of its members, in its elastic vigour, and its aptitude for the service of God and of the soul. His soul was, in its nature, spiritual, celestial, divine, indivisible, incorruptible, immortal, akin to the angels,—yea, to God himself."\*

Invested with the choicest gifts, his body was the masterpiece of the material creation; and his soul shone, in unaccompanied brightness, sole occupant of the moral world. Begotten by the Spirit of God, his endowments were worthy of his origin; consisting in the noblest powers of intellect, and the richest resources of knowledge, the law of God written on his heart, the glory of God revealed to his conscience, and his whole nature clothed in perfect rectitude and spotless holiness; and his free will, the efficient cause of all his actions, declaring the moral attitude of his nature, and proclaiming the affinities of his soul. His name, the organization of his body, and the endowments of his soul, the whole structure of his being, and constitution of his nature, had hidden reference to the coming of the second Adam. They were constructed, not only as a present irradiation of God's likeness, but in adaptation to that secret counsel by which the Son of the Highest was from everlasting ordained to become the Son of man, to assume part in man's nature; and, whilst hiding the lustre of the Godhead under the veil of human flesh, to constitute that veil a means of shedding forth a still clearer radiance of the divine perfections, and of displaying a likeness in which an adoring universe and a ransomed world should behold "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person,"—the "image of the invisible God."

\* Van Mastricht Theologia, lib. iii. cap. ix. 12.



Such was Adam in the day of his creation. No immature capacities dishonoured his inauguration; no imbecile minority prefaced his reign. He was created a king. Majesty shone in every line of his face; dominion sat enthroned in the expanse of his brow; and the lessons of true wisdom were inscribed in his heart. God's law was his counsel and delight, and God's glory his business and joy. Living amid a creation whose varying scenes and shadows were an unceasing anthem to the Creator,—whose whole frame was a harp, to be attuned by his fingers to still sweeter harmonies and loftier strains,—his happiness was in communion with Him whose honour he was ordained to shed abroad and celebrate. With open face, as man with his fellow-man, so conversed he with God; and, relying on the terms of a covenant "ordered in all things and sure," he anticipated the lapse of a little season, when, his probation ended, he should pass to higher spheres, and become possessor of a life and glory of which the dominion of earth and the habitation of Eden were but the faintly-foreshadowing pledge.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE LAW OF GOD.

We have seen the successive inauguration of the universe and of man, as instrumentalities designed and constructed for revealing the glory of the Triune God. To the same end, *God our Sovereign.* and signally important and luminous in the light of God's manifested perfections, is his holy law.

It is evident that the exercise of a universal, absolute and unchangeable sovereignty, by some being, is necessary to the harmony and happiness,—nay, to the very existence, of the universe which God has made. The Creator must be that sovereign. No other being has one requisite for the office. The very act of creation, implying, as it does, some suitable end to be attained, brings the Creator under obligation to his own wisdom to give his creatures such laws as will guide them to the accomplishment of that end; whether they be enstamped upon the very essence of the creature, as in the case of the material elements; attached to the organic structure, as in the vegetable creation and animal tribes; or inscribed on the heart and made known to the understanding, as in man and the angelic hosts.

We instinctively perceive it to be a matter of supreme obligation upon every intelligent creature to appreciate and honour the Being by whose wisdom, power and goodness, existence with all its blessings was conferred and is continued. Since all that a creature has, whether of being and powers or of possessions and time, is received from the Creator, and enjoyed from hour to hour as the gratuity of his bounty,—every one must feel that no obligation can be more complete or comprehensive than that which binds him to render his all to the Author of his being,—making subservient to this consideration every thought





and act, every emotion and affection of the soul; constituting the will of the Creator the invariable rule, and his glory the supreme and all-pervading motive. New relations may add new force to the obligations thus already existing; but they cannot be expanded to any wider compass. All is already due; and beyond this no title can be extended, whilst less than this no possible circumstances will justify or excuse. God, our preserver and benefactor, unfolds to us, in the daily exercise of his goodness, new arguments, challenging our gratitude and love. Yet these can demand no more than that entire devotion which was already the Creator's right, prior to any such experience. Were we to see a person in peril of death, from which we have power to rescue him, the obligation to use our power becomes at once complete. Should the party in danger prove to be a friend and benefactor, the duty remains precisely the same, although the motives of a common humanity are now enforced by the superadded claims of gratitude and love. So, we continually receive from God benefits and favours, which add increasing force to a Creator's claims. But the right of God, as Creator, can never be expanded by any subsequent transaction to a wider scope.

The ultimate sovereignty thus attributed to God as Creator is extensively denied. Particularly by the Hopkinsian school of divines are positions assumed, which are entirely irreconcilable with it. An undefined and incomprehensible something, known as "the nature of things," is supposed to exist, back of the very being of God himself, and independent of him; which constitutes the ultimate rule, endowed with supreme obligation alike over God and the creatures; conformity with which constitutes God the Holy One, and defection from which would abrogate his authority. Both Edwards and Bellamy, whilst they would have recoiled with indignation from the style of expression, often used by later writers, seem essentially to have held this opinion. Bellamy says that God by his infinite understanding "is perfectly acquainted with himself and with all his intelligent creatures; and so, perfectly knows what conduct in him toward them is right, fit and amiable, and such as

becomes such a one as he is; and also perfectly knows what conduct in his creatures towards him, and towards each other, is fit and amiable, and so their duty. He sees what is right, and infinitely loves it, because it is right. He sees what is wrong, and infinitely hates it, because it is wrong; and in his whole conduct as Governor of the world, he appears to be just what he is at heart,—an infinite friend to right, and an infinite enemy to wrong." "As to all his positive injunctions, they are evidently designed to promote a conformity to the moral law. And as to the moral law, it is originally founded upon the very reason and nature of things. The duties required therein are required, originally, because they are right in themselves. And the sins forbidden, are forbidden, originally, because they are unfit and wrong in themselves. The intrinsic fitness of the things required, and the intrinsic unfitness of the things forbidden, was the original ground, reason and foundation of the law."\*

To the same purpose is the language of Edwards. "There is a circumstantial difference between the moral agency of a ruler and a subject. I call it circumstantial, because it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, arising from the difference of circumstances. A ruler, acting in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its sanctions of threatenings and promises, rewards and punishments, as the subject is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore the moral agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a ruler towards his creatures, and never as a subject, differs in that respect from the moral agency of created, intelligent beings. God's actions, and particularly those which are to be attributed to him as moral governor, are morally good in the highest degree. They are most perfectly holy and righteous; and we must conceive of Him as influenced in the highest degree, by that which above all others is properly a moral inducement, viz., the moral good which He sees in such and such things: and therefore He is, in the proper sense, a

\* Bellamy's True Religion Delineated, sect. 2.



moral agent, the source of all moral ability and agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though by reason of his being supreme over all, it is not possible He should be under the influence of law or command, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments, counsels or warnings. The essential qualities of a moral agent are in God, in the greatest possible perfection; such as, understanding to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of discerning that moral worthiness and demerit, by which some things are praiseworthy, others deserving of blame and punishment; and also a capacity of choice, and choice guided by understanding, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praiseworthy."\* Later divines of the Hopkinsian school, have taught, in addition, that, "as moral agents, we are capable of knowing the relation in which we stand to our Creator and moral Governor, and how he ought to treat us," and "when his treatment of us is just and right." Of this theory, Dr. Edward Beecher will, after a little, present abundant illustration.

These doctrines seem to have gained nearly universal currency in the Congregational churches; and are admitted to the position of unquestioned and ultimate truths. It has long been occasion of painful surprise to those who love the doctrines of the Reformation, that those churches have shown a tendency, so general, to depart from the faith which their fathers cherished, and, in defence of which, they endured persecution and exile;—that the scriptural doctrines of their ancient confession have so slight a hold on the sons of the pilgrims; whilst every new form of error finds a cordial welcome and congenial home. We think reflection must convince the intelligent and candid mind, that the dogmas which we have just enumerated constitute one leading element in the clew to the mystery. These, releasing the minds of men from the restraints of God's law, refer them to "the light of reason," and "the nature of things," to know what is truth and duty. It is, therefore, no wonder,

\* Edwards on the Will, Part I. sect. 5.

that the theology of Calvin, of Augustine and Paul, the motto of which is, "Faith before reason," should be rejected, the rationalism of Pelagius be embraced, and the atheistic tendencies thereto appropriate be developed. It is no wonder, that,—the lamp of truth, the word of God, being disparaged, and reason enthroned in a proud self-sufficiency,—men should be left to wild and fanatical aberrations from the path of reason, and an utter obscuration of the light of truth.

The authority of the "nature of things" is fully set forth by the author of "The Conflict of Ages," who, by its aid, has attempted in that work the tremendous task of supplementing the Scriptures on the subject of original sin. As the work of Dr. Beecher is a recent and elaborate exposition and vindication of this doctrine, we will examine some of his leading positions. In laying down his fundamental principles, he asks, "How could we ever correctly judge of the honour or rectitude of God's conduct, if the standard of honour and rectitude revealed by him, in the structure of our minds, did not agree with his own standard on the same points? Such a state of things would lay the foundation of necessary and eternal discord between him and us, and that on the most important of all practical questions. We must, therefore, of necessity assume not only that there are judgments concerning honour and right which God has made the human mind to form with intuitive certainty, but that they are common to God and to man. This is a fundamental doctrine of the Bible. To test any alleged acts of God by such principles, is not improper rationalizing. God not only authorizes it, but even enjoins it as a sacred duty. To this point I call special attention.

"It is no less plain that, whatever these principles are, their authority is supreme. No considerations of mere expediency or policy, whether individual or general, if opposed to them, ought to have any force; nor with God can they have any force. Though there is above him neither judge nor judgment to which he is responsible, yet he has in his own mind an eternal and immutable law of honour and right, which he cannot disregard; and he is his own omniscient judge. Should he not follow his own





convictions of honour and of right, he could not retain his own self-respect, but would experience infinite self-condemnation and remorse: he would be the most miserable being in the universe. It is, therefore, an infinite necessity in God's own nature, that he should obey the laws of honour and of right; and beyond all doubt he ever has and ever will.\*

"What, then, are the principles of honour and right on the various points which we have specified?"† In answer to this question, Dr. Beecher proceeds through half a dozen pages to enumerate and expound as many different principles, which constitute the fundamental axiomata of his work. Our present remarks will relate to the bearing of this doctrine upon the authority of God, and the origin of moral distinctions. Another phase of the same doctrine will hereafter be considered in connection with the permission of moral evil in the world.

It is not unusual or improper to speak of God being bound to one or other of his attributes, when all that is meant is, that the given attribute, being a characteristic of the divine nature, involves the certainty that he will act in accordance with it. So also the phrase, "a necessity of the divine nature," by which is meant no control over the divine freedom, but the certainty by which we know that the Holy One will act in accordance with his holiness or other attributes; that is, will be himself. All such forms of expression are, however, to be confined within limits consistent with the constant recognition of the cardinal fact that the attributes thus signalized are but so many aspects in which God, in consideration of our infirm and limited capacities, has condescended to unfold to us the glory of his indivisible essence. The justice of God is not something inhering in the divine nature and having a subsistence distinct from his love, wisdom or power. It is nothing but the unity of the divine nature, viewed in one of its relations to the actions of accountable creatures. His power and wisdom are that nature viewed in certain relations to the creation and government of his works. And so of the other attributes. So also the names of God, and the various titles which he assumes, are designations

\* Conflict of Ages, p. 27.

† Ibid. p. 81.

to be used under similar limitation. This enunciation of an elementary truth in mental philosophy and theology may be thought superfluous here. And yet, undoubtedly, the statements above quoted are founded in, and derive their whole plausibility from, an entire forgetfulness of it. It is impossible to reduce them to terms of this principle, which shall not present them in direct contradiction and naked absurdity. Look, for example, at the second paragraph of the quotations above cited:—"It is no less plain that, whatever these principles are, their authority is supreme," &c. The only interpretation which can save this language from a reduction to atheism, is that which would explain the phrase, "an eternal and immutable law of honour and right," to mean nothing but the divine holiness; that is, in other words, the essential nature of God himself; to which also the pronoun "he" refers. But this converts the whole into a jumble of nonsense, whilst it very partially relieves it of the irreverence which stands out so conspicuously on the face of the passage. By the phrase, "the principles of honour and right," however, the writer does not design to signify the nature or essence of God. They are certain "rules," "dictates," or "laws," of which he predicates the following characteristics:—

1. They are reducible to formal statement. The author enumerates six of them.

2. They are of supreme and controlling obligation over all intelligent beings, including God himself. "Does any one allege his right as Creator to do as he will with his creatures? Within certain limits he has this right. But creation gives no right to the Creator to disregard or to undervalue the well-being of creatures, or to treat them contrary to the laws of their intellectual, moral and voluntary nature, on the ground that he created them."\*

3. The obligations which they impose upon God and the creatures are alike and in common. "Some, when pressed by their application to certain alleged acts of God, have denied that they are common alike to God and to man, and alike binding on

\* Conflict, p. 32.



both. Concerning this view, I would say with emphasis, that it is a most unfounded and pernicious position."\*

4. They are enforced by penal sanctions, of a competence to reach even to God himself. See the language already quoted:—"He is his own omniscient judge," &c.

5. Whilst man himself is to be tried by them, he, in turn, is bound by them to judge his Creator. "God himself enjoins it on men, as a sacred duty, to judge by them. He does not feel honoured by any defence which disregards them. Nay, he admits that his own conduct is amenable to judgment by these principles, and defends himself by an appeal to the same." "To test any alleged acts of God by such principles, is not improper rationalizing. God not only authorizes, but even enjoins it as a sacred duty. To this point I call special attention."†

It is to be observed in regard to these propositions, that not only the phrases used to designate the "principles," "dictates,"

§ 4. *He acts* or "laws," but every position assumed respecting *God* *above* them, implies an origin and existence independent of Jehovah, and an endowment of supremacy over

him. They are not principles decreed in sovereignty and freedom by the Creator, for the ordering of his works, and the guidance of his creatures; but such as even creative authority is not entitled to disregard. Only "within certain limits"—the limits of these principles—"has he a right to do what he will with his own." A necessity is laid upon him, if he form creation at all, to form and govern it by these rules, under penalty of self-reproach and misery, and the insubordination of the creatures,—"necessary and eternal discord between him and us; and that on the most important of all practical questions." But who is that Supreme, by whom these laws are ordained, and this penalty inflicted; and before whose bar mortals are required to cite God to account? Who fixed it so that "God ought to be regulated in his dealings with his creatures" by these principles; so that he as Creator "has no right" to go beyond the boundaries thus set to him? If it is pretended that God himself is the author of this law, we then ask,—How is it any thing else

\* Conflict, p. 26.

† Ibid. pp. 26, 27.

than absurd, to suppose him under a necessary obligation to a law of his own ordaining; in the light of which he is viewed as at once lawgiver and transgressor, judge, executioner and victim; inflicting on himself a penalty described in terms too shocking to repeat? Let it not be argued, that the case is an impossible one;—that "it is an infinite necessity in God's nature, that he should obey the laws of honour and right," and that therefore the theory is not responsible for the contradictions thus indicated. The necessity thus asserted, is, not only in the nature of the case, but in terms, defined to be a penal necessity. "It is, *therefore*,"—because, "should he not follow his own convictions of honour and right, he could not retain his own self-respect," &c.—"*therefore*," the necessity above stated. The case, then, of transgression, and the consequent relation of God to himself, as judge and defendant, executioner and victim, is not only supposable, but is actually supposed, as the alternative in the law,—as the argument enforcing obedience. The authority which imposes these obligations on the Holy One, is said to be "in his own mind, an eternal and immutable law of honour and right." Is this at all distinguishable from the grossest form of stoical philosophy, which described Jove as ruling in subordination to an eternal fate, in accordance with which Herodotus does not shrink from saying that "Jove himself could not avoid his destiny"? Preferable even, is the language of Seneca:—*Eadem necessitas et Deos alligat; irrevocabilis divina pariter, atque humana cursus vehit. Ille ipse, omnium conditor ac rector, scriptis quidom Fata, sed sequitur. Semper parat; semel jussit.* "The same necessity binds even the Gods; inevitable destiny bears along every thing, alike divine and human. The Creator and ruler of all, himself, indeed, inscribed the Fates; but follows their guidance. Forever he obeys; once only he decreed."\*

Whilst God is exhibited, in this scheme, in the bonds of some fatal Destiny, or superior God; on the other hand, man is by it released from subjection to his authority. He may appeal from God to himself; from the decrees of his Maker, to an ultimate arbiter, which sits enthroned in his own

\* Opera L. Annæi Senecæ Lib. De Providentia, cap. v.





bosom, in the form of the intuitive principles of honour and right. "They are common alike to God and to man, and alike binding on both." "Their authority is supreme." By them it is a "sacred duty" to test the character and conduct of God. The law and word of God is thus denied to possess any authority in itself. Only as far as it may be found in harmony with the eternal principles is it to be obeyed. Thus have we followed these vaunted principles to their legitimate termination in the dark abyss of atheism. Any obligations still recognised as due to God, are strictly mutual; as is the accountability; and to say, after this, that we are still held bound to obey the Almighty, is a mere deception. Not he, but the omnipotent principles, are to be obeyed; and should Jehovah be imagined by the miserable worm, who thus assumes the office of inquisitor and judge toward his Creator, to have violated those principles,—and of this, man is the judge,—what becomes his duty then? True, our author does not admit the possibility of such conclusions. True, he asserts, with the utmost confidence, that "beyond all doubt he ever has and ever will obey the laws of honour and right." But where did he acquire this confidence? Certainly not in the study of those "laws." The doctrine of our author renders it forever impossible that the creatures should be assured of the perfection of the Most High. A perfection which consists in conformity to a prescribed standard is the contradictory of perfection *per se*. It is a contingent and not a necessary perfection; and can only be proved to exist, when some being is found, competent to comprehend, infallibly and exhaustively, the law of reference and the infinite nature of God. Until such comparison is actually made, the supposed perfection of God must remain an unresolved problem. And when the judge is found, competent to the office thus indicated, the highest result to which it is possible to come, from the principles here set up, is the discovery in Jehovah of a finite perfection,—a perfection subordinate to the eternal principles, and determined by them. Thus, infinite excellence—perfection in and of itself—is attributed to the imagined law, and denied to Jehovah. But, should we admit Dr. Beecher's confidence in the perfection of God to be well founded, to what pur-

pose then is that sacred duty, so earnestly enjoined on us, to hold God answerable to the principles, and judge him by them? Are we to set out in this responsible duty with the confidence of Dr. B. as the fundamental proposition by which all is to be tried? What then becomes of "the supreme laws of honour and rectitude"? If the doctrine of "The Conflict" is true, the author is imperatively bound to hold his confidence, so freely expressed, as a mere private opinion, subject to correction upon further light. For, if it be a sacred duty to judge the conduct of God, by the standard of these "intuitive perceptions of the human mind," it is an equally sacred duty to give judgment, not according to any preconceived opinions, but by "the law and the testimony." In fact, the very announcement of such a preconception of the divine conduct, is of itself a dereliction from the duties of an impartial judge. It is an involuntary tribute to the irresponsible sovereignty of God, extorted from the heart of the author, in the midst of his oppositions of science, falsely so called.

The doctrine here controverted is identical with that of the whole company of modern skeptics and infidels. We recognise "the principles of honour and right" in Paine's "principles of moral justice," "ideas of moral justice and benevolence," "the immutable laws of science," "the great principles of divine morality, justice and mercy," &c. Reasoning from these principles, the blaspheming infidel attains to conclusions differing from those recognised and urged by our author, only in this;—that, whilst the former altogether rejects the word of God, the latter only requires that where its testimony differs from that of his "principles," it shall either be reduced to silence, or compelled to frame its speech after the Shibboleth of "honour and right." "There have been, and still are, those who think so much more of the verbal revelations of God," says Dr. B., "than of any other, that they almost overlook the fact that the foundations of all possible knowledge have been laid by God in the consciousness and the intuitive perceptions of the mind itself. Forgetful of this fact, they have often, by unfounded interpretations of Scripture, done violence to the mind, and overruled the decisions made by God himself through it; and then sought





shelter, in faith and mystery."\* "If any alleged actions of God come into collision with the natural and intuitive judgments of the human mind concerning what is honourable and right on the points specified, there is better reason to call in question the alleged facts, than to suppose those principles to be false, which God has made the human mind intuitively to recognise as true."† For example, when the patriarch Abraham was commanded to sacrifice the beloved child of his old age, "his son, his only son, Isaac," so far from yielding the implicit compliance which he did exercise, he should have replied, "The intuitive principles of honour and right forbid it. It cannot be that the Holy One should command an act of unprovoked murder. It cannot be that God should command an affectionate father to imbrue his hands in the blood of his pious and obedient son. The act comes into collision with the natural and intuitive judgments of my mind concerning what is honourable and right on the point specified. There is therefore better reason to call in question the alleged fact that God so commands, than to suppose those principles to be false which God has made my mind intuitively to recognise as true. Get thee behind me, *Satan*, for thou savourest not the things that be of God!"

But with these compare the corresponding positions of The Age of Reason. "Instead of studying theology, as is now done, out of the Bible and Testament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is disproved, it is necessary that we refer to the Bible of the creation. The principles we discover there are eternal, and of divine origin; they are the foundation of all the science that exists in the world, and must be the foundation of theology."‡ "It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science and the right use of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty."|| "The Bible represents God to be a changeable, passionate, vindictive being; making a world, and then drowning it; afterwards repenting of what he had done, and promising not to do so again; setting one nation

\* Conflict, p. 20.

† Ibid. p. 29.

‡ Paine's Theological Works, Boston, 1834, p. 150.

|| Ibid. p. 152.

to cut the throats of another, and stopping the course of the sun, till the butchery should be done. But the works of God in the creation preach to us another doctrine. . . . Now, which am I to believe; a book that any impostor may make and call the word of God,—or the creation itself which none but an Almighty Power could make? for the Bible says one thing, and the creation says the contrary. The Bible represents God with all the passions of a mortal, and the creation proclaims him with all the attributes of a God." . . . "All our ideas of the justice and goodness of God revolt at the impious cruelty of the Bible."\* To the same purpose is Rousseau:—"Your pretended supernatural proofs, your miracles and your prophecies reduce us to the folly of believing them all, on the credit of others, and of submitting the authority of God, speaking to our reason, to that of man. If those eternal truths of which my understanding forms the strongest conceptions, can possibly be false, I can have no hope of ever arriving at certitude; and, so far from being capable of being assured that you speak to me from God, I cannot even be assured of his existence."†

The difference between the positions of these atheistical philosophers and the divine is immaterial. Both recognise certain "intuitive principles," having an eternal and necessary existence prior to and independent of any revelation of the nature or expression of the will of God. Both acknowledge their authority to be supreme and their decisions final, not only in regard to the ways of men, but of God also. Both, under their instruction, find the dealings of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, worthy of condemnation. Here they part company. The philosophers unflinchingly follow their principles where they lead, and reject the book which has thus been weighed and found wanting. The divine tenders his aid to explain away what he admits to be the plain sense of the Scriptures, and to supply their deficiencies by the help of fancy, under the guidance of the intuitive perceptions. Thus are we supplied with an appendix to the sacred volume, in which we may learn what the Spirit of inspiration ought to have

\* Paine's Works, p. 154.

† The Savoyard Vicar, in Paine's Works, p. 870.



said, in order to "vindicate the ways of God to man." The skeptic is entitled to the credit of candour and courage at least, in that, having adopted principles so impious, he does not hesitate to follow them to a consistent conclusion, and reject at once the volume which they so palpably impugn, and which the other more dishonours by attempting to mend.

But the question may still recur, Are there not, after all, certain intuitive cognitions of the human mind, which constitute the standard of all our convictions on moral subjects? *§ 6. Office of intuition.* By intuitive cognitions, we suppose, are meant convictions arising primarily and of necessity in the mind, by an immediate and involuntary perception of their truth, independent of induction or argument. Of these, we reply, Their number is few; and, so far as relates to the present discussion, their office is one,—to constitute the connecting link between the authority of God and the soul of man. Their purpose is to bring man consciously into the presence of his Creator, that he may hear his voice and obey. Among these intuitions may be named the perception of the relation of cause and effect; the recognition of the Great First Cause as God; that he is infinite in perfections; and that, as God, he has an absolute property in his creatures, and is entitled to their highest homage and implicit obedience. By a reference to these alone can the question of the divine authority of any mediate revelation be determined. When God appeared to holy men of old in personal communications, his presence was undoubtedly self-evidencing; and the testimony which they, under the guidance of his Spirit, left on record for our instruction, is accompanied with a similar evidence to the soul in which the Spirit of God dwells. But the arguments by which it is attested to the intelligent understanding, however many be the links of connection, invariably lead us back to the principles above stated; and, however the corrupted and apostate soul of man may not and does not love the truths which are ascertained through them, these intuitive principles are admitted to a universal and necessary consent whenever and wherever they are announced. It is further to be observed, that, alike in the communications of God's Spirit

to inspired men, and in those which we receive by intermediate channels, the single point to which evidence is directed, is, whether the communication be from our Creator. This question is in no instance determined by the mere nature of the revelation, but in the one case by immediate intuition of God's presence, and in the other by appeal to the law of cause and effect. Not until this point is determined are we prepared to listen to the communication; and, it being once decided in the affirmative, conscience testifies, however unwilling we may be to hear, that He has a right to command, and that, whatever be the nature of the revelation, it is our duty to acquiesce and obey.

Of the intuitive principles stated by the author of "The Conflict," it is enough to say that no one of them will command universal consent, whilst some are likely to meet with unanimous rejection. They are not, therefore, intuitions; since it is a contradiction in terms so to designate propositions which may be honestly rejected by intelligent minds.

The views of the author of "The Conflict" involve and result from attributing to God moral relations and obligations, which, in the nature of the case, are alone applicable to the creatures. Upon the principle of proprietary right, which indisputably entitles the Creator to the absolute possession and unlimited control of the material universe, he has an equally absolute right to the obedience and service of man and all the intelligent creatures. Upon this ground God himself bases his authority, and claims obedience. When the challenge is made,—Why doeth he so?—By what right does he assume to rule?—the reply is invariably the same:—"I have created it. It is mine."—So declare the four-and-twenty Elders, whom John saw fall down before him that sat on the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. Such was the right upon which God founded his decree to punish the wickedness of the old world:—"I will destroy man whom I have created."—Gen. vi. 7. By this same authority does he assert his right to ordain the Son to be the Saviour of the world:—

§ 7. Testimony of the Scriptures.





"Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein; I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."—Isa. xlii. 5, 6. And again, "Thus saith the Lord, that created the heavens; God himself, that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is none else. . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear."—Isa. xlv. 18, 22, 23. Upon this same principle, does Paul justify that discrimination, by which God dispenses his sovereign grace to some, and withholds it from others. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him? and it shall be recompensed unto him again. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33-36. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?"—Rom. ix. 19-21. Precisely to the same purpose is the language of God himself:—"Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe to him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth? Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things

to come concerning my sons; and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded."—Isa. xlv. 9-12. Is it possible to read such passages as these, and yet question whether the Creator claims our obedience and devotion to his glory upon the ground of his creative property in us?

Conscience is that attribute of the soul, by which it perceives the moral relation which thus binds the intelligent creature to its Maker. The one sphere of its office is moral relations. The one law of its decrees is the authority of the Creator. The one principle, to which all the forms of its decisions are reducible, is, obedience. Its only penalty, is, consciousness of indignity done to rightful authority, and consequent self-reproach and sense of the Creator's frown. Thus every element in the phenomena of conscience, supposes subordination recognised to a rightful and supreme lawgiver. This is altogether inapplicable to the position of God; and disavowed by our author, as predicable of him. Yet, upon no other supposition, can we understand his language, describing God as his own omniscient judge, realizing self-condemnation and misery. Here evidently the Most High is placed, like man, in subordination to some superior authority, and controlled by a subservient conscience, and law within, recognising that supremacy.

It is asserted to be the right and duty of the creatures to sit in judgment upon the ways and word of God; and, if any thing § 8. Judgment is at variance with our sense of honour and right, upon God. to reject and condemn it, as not of God.

1. It is not enough, for establishing these positions, to show that God has written a law in the hearts of men, by the decrees of which the heathen world will be judged. The question is not concerning the criterion of men's actions; but, respecting their authority to sit in judgment on those of God. And the fact that, when the written word of God comes in, it at once supersedes the judicial power of the law in the heart, so that whilst "as many as have sinned without law shall perish without law;" on the other hand, "as many as have sinned in the law shall be



judged by the law,"—Rom. ii. 12,—shows that "the law in the heart" does not now possess the ultimate supremacy attributed to it by Dr. Beecher.

2. "The fact that the foundations of all possible knowledge have been laid by God in the consciousness and the intuitive perceptions of the mind itself," avails nothing, to establish the position laboured by our author. The argument is familiar, in the mouths of Romanists. "You are indebted," say they, "to the church for the knowledge that the Bible is the word of God. The church therefore has authority to interpret the Scriptures." The reply is self-evident. Even admitting the false assumption, still, the competence of a witness to establish a given fact, gives him no right of control over the matters which he attests. The witness who proves a will, is not thereby entitled to determine or control the bequests specified in it. The fact that we are ultimately dependent upon certain intuitions, to ascertain that God has spoken, gives them no right to determine what he ought to utter, or even what he has said.

3. The assertion by God of his own rectitude, and even his appeals to our consciences to justify his dealings with us, do not convey a right to assume the position asserted by Dr. B. On the contrary, the very design of such declarations and appeals, is to induce in us an unquestioning submission to his authority and acquiescence in his testimony, at all times, and under all circumstances. It is designed to recall the perverse soul of man, to its own intuitive consciousness that, whatever be his ways, they are righteous; as an argument on the one hand of the sinfulness of man's transgressions, and, on the other, of the duty of lowly and universal acquiescence and obedience. So, a parent may assert, to a child, the rectitude of his authority; and even proceed so far as to explain the meaning of some of his actions; and yet, so far from implying, thus, any right in the child to hold him amenable to its judgment, the whole intention is directly the reverse.

4. On the other hand, many express declarations of the word of God, negative, with stern rebuke, the presumption which would question Jehovah as to his ways. Such is the lesson to

which the entire book of Job is directed. The former part of it narrates an argument between Job and his three friends, in which they were all guilty of an irreverent trial of the conduct of God, at the bar of carnal reason. In the thirty-third chapter, the discussion is taken up by Elihu, who gives the key to the whole book. "Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression; I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me. Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy; he putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.—Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? For he giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 8–13. "He giveth not account of any of his matters."—This is the text of the entire discourse of Elihu; which is terminated by the voice of God himself, in a series of sublime challenges to Job, in which his righteousness is vindicated solely by appeal to his majesty and power as Creator. In the sequel, Job confesses, in the dust, the impiety of his venturing to sit in inquest on the ways of the Almighty; and acknowledges His right to rule unquestioned; and the duty of man to adore and obey. "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.—Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?—Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."—Job xlii. 2–6. Nothing can here be more appropriate, than the comment of Henry:—"Job owns himself to be guilty of that which God had charged him with, in the beginning of his discourse. 'Lord, the first word that thou saidst was,—Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?—There needed no more; that word convinced me; . . . I have passed a judgment upon the dispensations of Providence, though I was utterly a stranger to the reasons of them.' Here, he owns himself ignorant of the





divine counsels; and so we are all. God's judgments are a great deep, which we cannot fathom, much less find out the springs of. We see what God does, but we neither know why he does it, what he is driving at, nor what he will bring it to: these are things too wonderful for us; out of our sight to discover, out of our reach to alter, and out of our jurisdiction to judge of; they are things which we know not; it is quite above our capacity to pass a verdict upon them."

In the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, we may witness the appeal of an objector, against the sovereign dispensations of God, to the intuitive perceptions of honour and right; and the reception which it meets from the Spirit of God. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that replest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" &c.—Rom. ix. 19, 20. Paul allows no space for the performance of the sacred duty of holding the Most High to account. Other passages to the same effect will throng on the attention of the Bible student.

5. Were the doctrine true which we oppose, it would involve us in a state of hopeless darkness, and perplexity in regard to the way of duty and salvation. We have lamentable proof, in our daily experience, that both our intellectual and moral powers are in a state of ruin. Our understandings are darkened, and our affections perverted, insomuch that we scarcely dare rely with confidence upon their decisions from the briefest inductions concerning the most necessary truths. God is infinitely above our comprehension; and his ways are as unsearchable as his nature. Any mistake, in relation to his character and our relations to him, involves imminent peril of perdition, under the curse of our Creator. Yet, in such circumstances, we are required to take up that sacred volume, which comes to us as the very word of God, that shall be a lamp to our darkness and a guide to our ignorance; and test its authority, not by the inquiry,—Does it bring evidence of its heavenly origin?—but by the question, whether each several communication therein contained is such as God ought to have made; determining the character of each

part of that record, by reference to the standard of man's ruinous nature; and explaining away, or rejecting, whatever is thus determined to be unworthy of God. Can we hope for any thing but mistake and ruin, in such a process? In terms, the statement of Dr. Beecher purports to be a mere criterion by which to judge of the authenticity of any professed revelation from God. In fact, it limits the authority of God himself. As we have formerly seen, our author avowedly confines that authority within the principles. Here, he limits it by our judgments, deduced from them. If God himself should come to us, in visible and bodily form, as he did to Abraham, and address to us any sort of communications, we are taught, that he requires us to test them all by the intuitive principles; and if, in our judgment, they fail to stand the test, we are to reject them. The alternative is, that God has violated the eternal law and ought not to be obeyed; or, that it is not God that speaks. Either alternative is atheism. A God whose word is not law, in and of itself, is no God.

The illustration which the book of Dr. B. presents, of the success of such a course of proceeding, is a signal example of *reductio ad absurdum*, a conclusive proof of the fallacy of the whole scheme. Assuming the seat of judgment, and laying down the six principles to which we have referred at the beginning of this chapter, he proceeds to test by them the doctrine of the Scriptures on the subject of original sin. The word of God is put to the question. It replies, "In Adam all die."—1 Cor. xv. 22. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.—Through the offence of one many be dead.—By one man's offence death reigned by one.—By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.—By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Rom. v. 12, 15-18. Not so! interposes the judge from the bench. "The sin of Adam, in fact, exerted no influence whatever on his race;" and the supposition that it does is contrary to the nature of things, and the intuitive principles of honour and right. What course now does Dr. Beecher pursue? He has

§ 9. Dr. Beecher's experiment.





assumed the place of judgment, under a sacred obligation to try and determine according to intuitive principles; under the conviction, that if any thing, though professedly from God, "come into collision with the natural and intuitive judgments of the human mind, there is better reason to call in question the alleged facts, than to suppose those principles to be false which God has made the human mind intuitively to recognise as true." He has defined those principles, which thus constitute the standard of judgment. He has selected his case, and applied the rule, and found a direct contradiction between the word of God and the intuitive principles. Does he, as an impartial judge, give sentence, and erase the obnoxious statements from the sacred page? No, he leaves the bench and becomes an advocate in the case. "It is equally in accordance with the laws of language and the usages of Scripture to suppose that the sequence [between Adam's sin and our ruin] is one of merely apparent causation; so that the sin of Adam, in fact, exerted no influence whatever on his race, but it and its sequences were merely ordered so to stand in relation to each other as to make, at the very introduction of the human race into this world, a striking type of the coming Messiah, by whom the race was to be redeemed."\* No! all men do not die in Adam; but "if in a previous state of existence, God created all men with such constitutions, and placed them in such circumstances, as the laws of honour and of right demanded,—if, then, they revolted, and corrupted themselves, and forfeited their rights, and were introduced into this world under a dispensation of sovereignty, disclosing both justice and mercy,—then all conflict of the moving powers of Christianity can be at once and entirely removed."† If all this wild dream be true, and if it may be pleaded at the bar as an element in the case on trial, then may the ways of God be justified!

But may not that glorious One, whom the patron of this unscriptural fancy has called to account, well demand, in reference to such a vindication,—by what authority he assumes to be an advocate in the cause?—who authorized him to supplement the

\* Conflict of Ages, p. 376.

† Ibid. p. 221.

sacred word with the revelations of his intuitive sense? May we not appropriate to such a case God's challenge to Job:—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it."—Job xxxviii. 2, xl. 2.

The scheme here examined involves an utter disregard of the fact that the final end of all things is, the revelation of God. ¶ 10. *God* The moment we allow that blessed One to be limited *revealed.* in any way, in the government of his works, we are constrained to deny him to have been free in their creation. If entirely independent in the work of creation, his property in his creatures must be absolute and unlimited, and his conduct toward them must remain free from any restraint or control, subject only to his independent and absolute discretion. If, therefore, he is subject to limitation in his governmental administration, he must have been so in his creative work. In fact, this theory is an offshoot of optimism, which actually asserts such a restraint. But, if any restraint be allowed, all discretion is thereby absolutely precluded. Neither in respect to the fact nor the design of creation, the number and nature of the creatures, the laws which govern them, nor the administration which presides over them, is there thenceforward any pertinence in inquiring as to the will of God, his nature, character or purposes. He is a cipher in the account; or, at best, a mere mechanic, whose office it is, slavishly to copy the model set before him. If God should propose to make his own glory the chief end of his works, the Nature of Things may step in and say, "Nay, but it shall be the happiness of the creatures,—the greatest good of the greatest number." Perhaps, in that number it may allow Jehovah to count for one. But that is as the sovereign Principles may determine. And, although, as read by Edwards and his earlier followers, they cordially consent, we have no assurance that a generation will not arise, whose superior intelligence and position will enable them to discover directly the reverse. One thing, however, remains abundantly sure, that the moment we admit the supremacy of the "Nature of Things," of Beecher's



"Principles," or of any thing else than God's own nature, the fountain of his will, any true revelation of God is forever precluded. No creature can thereafter tell, at what point, or in what form, the free agency of God has been limited. None can tell how different the whole system had been, if it all had resulted from his mere discretion. He may be holy, but it can never be proved. He may be good, but it cannot be known. The seeming evidence may all proceed, not from his will, but from the nature of things. Thus does the theory cast a pall of utter and eternal darkness over the glory of God; and exalt in his stead a blind, unintelligent, impersonal deity, which, however named, is the very Brahma of eastern idolatry. Others may bow at this shrine; but such is not the God whom we worship. "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."—Ps. cxv. 3. All his works praise him, and his saints bless and rejoice in him, because he hath done thus;—because in all the operation of his hands and testimony of his word, they see the pure outshining of his own perfection,—the sovereign, uncontrolled and uninfluenced unfolding of the radiant glories of his own nature,—the revelation of himself as, I AM THAT I AM.

Any theory which limits the authority and discretion of the Creator, and our duty of obedience to him, by other laws than his own free will, the expression of his own essential nature, is alike untenable and impious. The only rule of all morality, the comprehensive sum of all duty, is expressed by the Preacher in the closing words of the book of Ecclesiastes:—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."—Eccl. xii. 13. When God our Creator, has spoken, it is ours unquestioning to obey. Though it be with Samuel to exterminate the mother with her child, an entire nation,—with the tribe of Levi to slay their brethren,—or with the father of the faithful to immolate his son; "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."—1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

The fundamental principle which governs this subject, is that a proprietor is entitled to the beneficial uses, absolute and entire, of his property. This, in fact, is the essential idea of the proprietary relation; divested of which, the word is an unmeaning sound, and the relation disappears. This further implies, that the assertion of this proprietary right in perpetuity, or the more or less entire alienation of it, belongs altogether to the sovereign discretion of the proprietor; who may, unquestioned and uncontrolled, do in the matter according to his own mere pleasure. Since then the work of creation is but the investiture of the creatures with what properly and essentially belongs to no other than God alone,—existence, and the conditions of existence and enjoyment,—and since he expressly and continually declares, both in the very act of creation, and in the whole process of his government, that the being and endowments with which he has clothed the creatures are inalienably his own, and only lent for his own service and glory; it is evident that no higher title to proprietary authority can be conceived than that which here exists, and that the right of God to the service of the creature must be perfect and supreme; and his authority comprehensive of the entire being. If there be in the creature any capacity or principle of agency which is not the gift of God, that may be reserved. But, if all is derived from him, all is due to his service; and the vindication of this his property in the works of his own hands, demands that he should require a subordination comprehensive of the whole being, over heart, soul, mind and strength; over body and spirit; which all alike are his.

Such are the obligations in which the creature is involved, by the very necessity of his created nature. It results that a holy God, a righteous sovereign, must, alike in respect to his wisdom, his authority and that holiness which demands the enforcement of what is right, require of all his creatures, that supreme regard to his will and glory, which his own purpose in creation contemplated, and which reason thus so clearly indicates, and justice demands.

In fact, it is a matter of infinite necessity to the creatures,





that God should constitute himself the common centre and bond of harmony, alike to the material and moral universe. We are, for example, dependent upon the air flowing through our lungs for the continuance of life. Suppose the atmosphere to be left uncontrolled, or placed under the dominion of one ruler, and the earth under another. The result must be instant destruction to every living thing. So too of the heavenly bodies;—all must be under the control of one governing, guiding hand, or collision and ruin must ensue.

The same thing is true of the intelligent and moral part of creation. Conceive a world organized and peopled by God; endowed with every thing requisite for subsistence; its population gifted with an existence continued independently of the immediate agency of omnipotence, and then severed from God's domain, freed from his sceptre, released from his law, obliterated from his thoughts, and set free from responsibility to his judgment bar!

Could we visit that lost world and witness the condition of its inhabitants, what should we see? We should find a population to whom all the persuasive arguments arising from the hopes of their Creator's favour have lost their significance and power. They realize no restraint from dread of his displeasure. For they have no God. They have no promises to inspire hope, nor threatenings to appeal to fear. We should find intelligences without a conscience,—without a conception of the duty of rectitude or the crime of wrong-doing and sin. For wrong is deviation from a standard of duty, from a law of obligation; and sin is violation of the requirements of the Creator. Whilst righteousness is conformity to those obligations,—obedience to the law. But, to these forsaken beings, as there is no sovereign, there is no law,—no obligation of conformity, as there is no standard of duty.

In such a world, every bond of moral rectitude, and every tie of social obligation, would be dissolved by the stroke that severed the bond which held them in dependence upon Jehovah's throne. From thence, only, does the marriage tie derive its sanctitude, and the relations of the family, all their authority

and tenderness. From thence do the social relations and common charities derive their spring; and the political system, its constitution and controlling power. In short, the decree which severs the creature from immediate and conscious dependence and obligation to the Creator, would convert cherubim into devils, and paradise into a hell, where self would be to each, supreme; and appetite and passion the ultimate motives, and only law.

If a creature is to be happy, that end can never be attained, except by constituting the Creator the great centre of all his motions,—by making God's law his rule, God's favour his highest aspiration, and God's glory his great end. As God made him for his own pleasure, and to his own glory; and as his tribute to these most righteously belongs to God: so is it equally essential to the well-being and happiness of the creature himself, spontaneously, and with all his heart, to render that tribute to his Maker.

Thus then does it appear, from reasons which commend themselves to our unreserved acquiescence, antecedent to any revelation of the will of God, that his commandment, when given, must announce the supreme duty of man and angels, the great business of creation, to be the Creator's glory. The law is given;—and its whole burden is summed in one word:—"Glorify God in your body and spirit, which are God's." Such is the occasion of the first and great commandment of the law:—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind."

"The second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If the discovery of the glory of the divine perfections be the great end of creation, and supreme love to God the great duty of rational beings, love to each other becomes of the highest obligation; as, in fact, essential to the former. They recognise in each other the creatures of his power, whose several endowments and enjoyments are the gifts of his goodness. Their harmony and love attest the unity and wisdom of his nature and designs. Their consequent happiness proclaims him good. Their



unanimous homage exalts his praise. And, whilst they vie as co-workers with him, in promoting each other's happiness, each serves as a mirror, in which is seen reflected the image of his infinite beneficence.

Such was that most perfect law, under which man was created;—its precepts based in reasons most worthy of God, and originating in the very attributes of his own nature;—in its influence felicitous to man and the creatures, and essential to account for, or perpetuate, the existence of creation itself. Through its instrumentality, three purposes are accomplished. It serves for the revelation of the moral perfections of God; it constitutes an assertion of his sovereignty; and is a touchstone for the creatures. In two ways does it make known the moral perfections of God;—as the law itself is a definition and announcement of those perfections, addressed to the understandings of the intelligent creatures;—and, as they, conforming themselves to its rule, are mirrors, in which the glorious image of the Lawgiver is reflected, so as to be mutually recognised and admired by them. It asserts the Creator's sovereignty, by its preceptive form; and vindicates it, by the penal terrors of its curse. And it constitutes a touchstone by the aid of which the actions of the creatures may be tested, and all ambiguity precluded, as to their conformity to, or alienation from, the likeness of God. Based in such principles, and appointed to such ends, this law must be, as it is, universal in its authority and unchangeable in its terms. By it, angels in glory, and devils in hell, are bound and ruled. By it, man, innocent, fallen, redeemed, and reprobate, is governed. And, in conformity with its precepts and design, the worlds of space and the lower orders of creatures, are organized and adapted.

Of this law it is a signal characteristic, that it requires perfect obedience. It might seem superfluous to specify this feature,

§ 13. *The characteristics of the Law.*

but for the importance sometimes attributed to what is absurdly called "imperfect obedience;" which is supposed to be acceptable, if sincere. On the contrary, the apostle testifies that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,"—James ii. 10; and the Son of God himself asserts the same thing, when

he exhorts, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The character of its author demands that his should be a law of perfection; and nothing less would have been appropriate to the design of the law,—the revelation of its Author's glory,—and to the perfection which shone in the beings to whom it was at first revealed. In fact, it is of the very nature of law to require perfect obedience. It recognises no alternative between obedience and transgression. To say that the law requires the performance of such and such duties, but does not enforce the obligation, is a contradiction in terms. A line from which the law allows deflection, is not the line of its requirements. An imperfect obedience is acknowledged transgression; and the sincerity which is supposed to compensate for the imperfection, either attaches to the partial obedience, and is therefore no more than a part of it, which cannot compensate for what it lacks; or it characterizes the transgression, and so proves the falsity of the pretended conformity, even in so far as it assumes such a seeming. If it be allowed that the law can tolerate any measure of transgression without punishment, there then remains no line to mark the bounds beyond which transgression may not go; and, in fact, the precept being thus trampled under foot, and the penalty set aside, the law itself is annulled, and the universe is left without guide or ruler.

A second feature of the law, is that it is comprehensive of the entire moral being of those upon whom its precept is laid. It does not merely concern itself with actions, but with the nature, the fountain whence they flow. In fact, when the precept in terms applies to the formal actions of the creature, it in that fact asserts a jurisdiction over the nature of the soul, the attitude of the powers, which is the cause of the actions, and of their moral nature. The sum of the first table of the law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."—Mark xii. 30. There is no element of the being,—there is no power of the nature, of the body, or of the soul,—which is not thus comprehended in the obligation of the law. Its demand is, "Glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are





God's."—1 Cor. vi. 20. Inasmuch as all of body and soul—not only the active faculties, but the inmost powers—were made by God, for himself, the reason which calls for a law at all, demands that its compass include all these, directing all to God's glory. Of this we shall speak more fully in a subsequent chapter.

The law, thus strict and comprehensive in its demands, was also unchangeable in its terms, and of perpetual obligation. This necessarily results from the perfection of its nature, the excellence of its origin, and the unchangeableness of Him whose perfections it proclaims; and is further indicated in the manner in which, under changing circumstances, it has been repeatedly re-announced and enforced. Originally inscribed on the heart of Adam in his creation, it was recognised and comprehended in the subsequent transaction respecting the tree of knowledge. Transgression of it by our first parents involved them and their race in its penal curse. Under its condemnation, the nations of the old world, the cities of the plain, and the people of Canaan, perished; and Pharaoh and his kingdom suffered the scourges of God. When a new dispensation of grace was introduced, it was attended with the tremendous scene of Sinai; whose thunders and flame proclaimed the law, not set aside, or mitigated in its demands; but clothed with the robes and sword of vindictive justice, to punish transgression. When the Son of God came in the flesh, to redeem transgressors, his largest recorded discourse was introduced with the admonition, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—Matt. v. 17, 18. The whole of that discourse is an illustration and enforcement of the spirituality and authority of the law, all of whose precepts are in it, summed in the one comprehensive requirement, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. v. 48. The whole life of the Son of God, who was "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law,"—Gal. iv. 4, 5,—is a most signal proof that none of its requirements had been lowered, nor its penalty modified nor set aside.

All the attributes of God join to assert that his law is immutable and inexorable in its claims. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good;" and shall the Holy One set it aside? Its demands are truth and righteousness; and shall a righteous God fail to enforce them? Even the imagination that he might abrogate it, is blasphemous. It is, to suppose that he may say to his creatures, "My laws are perfect, but I do not require them to be obeyed. My commands are holy, but transgression is not displeasing to me. My threatenings are righteous, but righteousness and truth will not enforce them." In short, it is to assume that he whose name is Holy, and "who is of purer eyes than to behold evil," may cease to view it with indignation, and may regard open rebellion with complacency;—that he may break down the barriers which divide corruption from holiness, and bridge the gulf which separates hell and heaven. The unchangeableness of God concurs with his holiness, to forbid the repeal of the least commandment of his law. He has said that these are his requirements; that he that doeth shall live, but he that transgresseth shall die. And "God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"—Num. xxiii. 19. How emphatic his admonition by the prophet!—"Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xli. 9, 10. Well exclaims the Psalmist, "Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever."—Psalm cxix. 160.

The perpetuity of the divine law further appears in its comprehensive scope, which includes all possible cases and provided for all emergencies. Perfectly adapted to the state of man innocent, it contemplated, and made full provision for, the contingency of man guilty. In the doom of death, as the penalty of sin, it provided for the case that has occurred, in the fall of our race; and thus evinced, that He who





sees the end from the beginning, did not intend, upon that occurrence, to change his plan, or modify his requirements. Transgression could not abrogate the authority of the law. It forfeits all title to any rewards of obedience. But the authority of a violated law, even before human tribunals, still remains as complete and unquestioned as before transgression; and if this be right in relation to the laws of man, much more in respect to that of which we speak. It may still be supposed that upon the occurrence of transgression, the precept falls into abeyance, and the whole authority of the law takes the form of penal infliction. Against this supposition, the first objection is, that it militates against the reason of the law itself. We have seen this to have been, the glory of God; and that, from the nature of the case, the relation of the creature binds him with his active powers to seek this end. It is not sufficient that God will certainly be glorified in him. With this aspect of the matter, belonging as it does to God's wisdom and agency, the creature has nothing to do, but to wonder and adore. But his active powers and capacities are, both in their original and continuance, gifts of the divine goodness; and hence, as already shown, perpetual debtors to serve his glory, and do his will. Transgression has not divested God of this his property; and it is impossible to conceive how that glory which the susceptibilities of the creature passively display, by the endurance of the penalty, can in any way release those active powers, from their appropriate duties and services; unless upon a principle which would also release the souls and affections of saints and angels from bringing their tribute, because of that which their bodies render; and, in fine, exonerate all the faculties and members of the being, on the score of the subordination and fealty of any one of their number.

But it may be objected, that to require of the creature obedience to the law, whilst in the act of enduring its penalty, involves impossibilities, both moral and physical. The supposed moral impossibility consists in the fact, that sin implies such a disorder of the whole being, and transformation and debasement of all the powers,—such a loss of integrity, aversion from God

and holiness, and bondage to corruption, as precludes the possibility of unaided return to love and obedience. This inextricable difficulty, however, in which transgression involves the sinner, is one chief element in the sinfulness of sin; a principal cause of the greatness of its condemnation. The incompatibility between the law and the position of the transgressor, is involved in the very idea of either; and the sinner cannot expect exemption from its authority on the ground of aversion to its holiness, or of a disorder in his nature induced by his own apostasy. If the objection be well founded, an individual can never commit more than a single act of sin. Sin is transgression of the law; and if the transgression sets aside the precept, the party is thenceforth free to follow the dictates of his own will. Neither, on the one hand, does his disregard of the law constitute sin, nor, on the other, will conformity to it constitute virtue. Thus, then, angels may sin, but devils cannot! and he who lives in some measure according to the laws of morality and the rule of the Scriptures, is on this supposition no more worthy of approval than is he who sets at defiance alike the decencies of life and the law of God! In fact, since every idea of morality in the creatures refers to a conformity to God's nature as set forth in the law, and since those can have no moral character who are not called to such conformity, it follows, that the first act of transgression, if it abrogates the precepts of the law, robs the creature of moral character; and the blasphemies of devils are not sinful, nor they themselves to be accounted wicked!

The physical impossibilities, which may be supposed to be implied in the continued authority of the precepts of the law, whilst the penalty is endured, are, first, that the bonds of the penalty preclude the possibility of performing the duties enjoined by the law. Thus the spirits in prison cannot assume a place amid the adoring throng before the throne. Second, since the penalty is suffering, against which nature necessarily and involuntarily revolts, it may be supposed to be impossible that the sinner can view the law with complacency, and willingly submit to its authority; which is, in other words, to be willing to suffer its penal infliction.



In regard to the first of these difficulties, we need only here remark, that the law does not prescribe any particular forms or conditions, as requisite to its requirements. It lays down the great principle of supreme love and devotion to the glory of God, and leaves to the determinations of God's providence, the manner and circumstances in which this principle shall be brought into exercise. The law does not require the devils to ascend into heaven; and its penalty forbids it. It does not, however, forbid, but by its scourge enforces the demand of supreme love and obedience to God, even in hell, and unrepining acquiescence in the punishment which his glory requires for their sins. Of this, however, more hereafter.

But it may be thought unreasonable to require acquiescence in the penal infliction. This idea results from a mistaken apprehension, as to what it is of which the acquiescence is predicated. It is true that every being must recoil from misery as such; and as true of the slightest pain or discomfort we can realize, as, of the intensest agonies of hell. But in this respect, the misery of the sinner is no more pleasing to God, than to the victim himself. "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."—*Iam. iii. 33.* "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."—*Ezek. xxxiii. 11.* And yet he afflicts the righteous, and pours out his fury upon the wicked. Afflictions, as they are suffering, he does not himself delight in, nor does he require it of the creatures. But as satisfaction to his justice, as a means to his own glory, not only is it, in general, true that he approves it, but even when the victim was the spotless Son of his love, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him;" and, whilst recoiling nature, in the Son, cries, in the bitter agony, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," he, who is our pattern, and has shown us perfectly what the law demands, by what he wrought and endured, adds in holy acquiescence, even when the "pains of hell got hold upon" him,—*"yet not my will, but thine, be done."* This holy example, every Christian, in his measure, imitates, whilst he, with the great apostle, "glories in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon him." As, therefore, the law does not require sinners to

delight in that which is not pleasing to God himself, that is, misery in itself considered; and as the cases above cited and the hourly experience of all attest that we may and do look upon suffering with complacency in view of proportionate ends to be accomplished by it, the contradiction and impossibility which are apprehended vanish.

It may, however, be thought that the difficulty still remains, on the other hand;—that acquiescence and delight in the will and glory of God, as seen in his judgments, would rob the curse of its sting and the penalty of its power; so that still suffering is incompatible with coincident obedience to the law. But is it so, that a spirit of rebellion is essential to give the penalty its power? Is it so, that the Governor and Judge of all is dependent on the hostile co-operation of the victim, in order to enforce the threatening of his law? Is it true, that he has no other means for the punishment of sin, than the skilful employment of those which flow as natural results from the sin itself, in the heart and nature of the sinner? How, then, are we to explain the history of Him who "was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth"? The history of his life and death, alike vindicate his own declaration, "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting."—*Isa. l. 5, 6.* Yet was he "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; . . . stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."—*Isa. liii. 3, 4.* The assumption here opposed, leads, in fact, to the conclusion that the blood of Christ was shed in vain. If the penalty is only in its nature competent to bring suffering to those who continue to rebel, and submission of itself forms heaven in the soul, this implies, in other words, that justice is satisfied with submission, without any penal infliction; and, in order to the salvation of sinners, it was only needful that the Holy Spirit should by his transforming power subdue the enmity, and bring the will to conformity with the will of God. So that the agonies of Calvary, if this doctrine be true, were suffered without necessity. True, indeed, he





who should without repining bow his neck to the stroke of justice, and sin no more, would not be condemned by the law to endure the fearful scourge of the hardened and resisting rebel. But this is only to say that one transgression is not punished with the aggravated doom that follows multiplied offences and persistent rebellion.

Thus, we conclude that neither transgression, nor the disorder and ruin in the nature of the creature which results from sin, nor the dominion of corruption, nor the bondage of the penalty, abrogates or relaxes the duty of active obedience to the precepts of the law. They retain their integrity and enforce their demands, though transgression be continual, man's nature a ruin, and the penalty enforced in the lowest hell.

Whilst we thus assert the unchangeableness of the divine law, it is not thereby meant to imply that the obligations resulting from its precept are circumstantially the same, in all the varying conditions of the creature. On the contrary, the flexibility which adapts it to the guidance of the creature, in every variety of situations, is an eminent trait of its perfection. The same principle of supreme love to God, and regard to his glory, under the guidance of which Adam in innocence came freely into the immediate presence of his Maker, now precludes approach, except through a Mediator. The same rule which at first enforced on him a grateful appreciation of the integrity in which he was clothed,—after his fall, demanded self-loathing, and repentance for sin; and upon the coming in of the promise, required faith in the blood of the covenant. As we have seen, the ultimate principle from whence the several precepts of the law originate, is the duty to glorify God. Hence arise the two tables which require supreme love to God, and equal love to our neighbour. These two comprehend every requirement of the decalogue. This is sufficiently evident in itself, and is unequivocally asserted by the Lord Jesus:—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these

§ 15. It exists  
itself to all  
cases.

two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—Matt. xxii. 37-40. To the same purpose is the language of Paul:—"He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."—Rom. xiii. 8-10. Hence the Shorter Catechism declares that "The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience was the moral law;" and immediately adds that this rule, "the moral law, is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments;" thus identifying the decalogue, in its essential principles, with the law of creation.

But it may not be so readily perceived how repentance and faith were embraced in that law; since they suppose sin, which the law forbids. True;—but, despite the law, sin has entered. Now, what says the law to the sinner? Precisely the same that it spake before transgression:—"Glorify God in your body and spirit, which are God's." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." But love to God means nothing, if it does not imply hatred to whatever is opposed to him. His glory cannot be asserted, without abasing whatever exalts itself against him. To love his holiness, is the same thing as to abhor its opposite. Thus, he who finds sin in himself—as it is opposition to God's glory, dishonour to his holiness, and rebellion against his sovereignty—is obliged to exercise self-loathing and abasement, to hate his sin and turn from it, by the terms of the very precept which was inscribed on the heart of innocence in the garden. So also of faith. The sinner sees, in the work and offices of Christ, justice satisfied, and mercy revealed; the powers of darkness destroyed, and the race of man redeemed; God's wisdom, holiness and truth vindicated; and new lustre shed on all the attributes of the divine nature. His duty of love to God and zeal for his glory at once calls him to admire and adore the wisdom, grace and glory here revealed, and yield himself a willing and obedient servant to Him that was cruci-



fied; believing his word, and trusting his love and power for salvation.

Another point which it is important to note, is that the duty of repentance and new obedience which the law thus imposes upon transgressors, it enjoins entirely irrespective of any plan of salvation which God may in his grace devise. The fact that Satan has no escape from the chains of darkness, makes it none the less his duty to loathe and abhor his sins, and adore and serve his Creator and Judge. Had no Saviour ever been provided for our ruined world, sin would have been just as evil as now, and abhorrence of it and return to obedience as much the duty of every child of Adam. Because individuals severally have no pledge that they are predestinated to a place among the ransomed throng, no one is any the less required to abase himself in the dust, and adore the justice which will not let sin go unpunished. Although they do not know that Christ died with a purpose of salvation personally for them, it still becomes and is required of them, to admire and rejoice in the glorious grace which is revealed in the cross. The law is not less righteous, nor its precept less binding, because of transgressions already wrought, or the curse already realized. It not only enjoins on the angelic hosts perfect holiness and loftiest praise; on the ransomed throng in heaven, all the holy affections and joyful adoration which they exercise; and on believers here, every grace of the Spirit; but upon devils and wicked men, deep abasement and repentance; and upon all, universal obedience, as imperative and as perfect as though sin had never shed a stain on the fair creation of God.

Yet, whilst thus the law enjoins every duty, it provides no relief from the condemnation of past transgressions, even to the humble penitent who walks in new obedience. It knows nothing but precept and penalty; and the sinner who shall come to the tribunal of the law, clothed in every grace,—though he have repentance, and faith, and love, and joy; if he have not some better way than these, will not find them all avail to purchase indemnity, or even to mitigate the punishment of one little sin. At the bar of rectitude his graces will all confess, “We are un-

profitable servant; we have done that which was our duty to do.” Hence the apostle declares that “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin,”—Rom. iii. 20; and again, “If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”—Gal. ii. 21.

The reduction of the requirements of the law to the form of a written code after the fall, was a singular act of grace to man.

§ 16. *Offices of the written Law.* Prior to the fall, the law written on Adam's heart constituted an abundant revelation of moral excellence, for his imitation; and the one principle of love

was sufficient for his guidance, thus enlightened, in the right performance of all his duties. By the apostasy, the clearness and truthfulness of Adam's spiritual vision was lost. He no longer sees holiness in its true beauty, nor sin in its real deformity. To man, thus involved in darkness, the written law was given as “a lamp to his feet and a light to his path.” “It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come, to whom the promise was made.”—Gal. iii. 19. The reannouncement of the law, in such circumstances, was a proclamation of mercy; even although every precept was arrayed in curses. It was a pledge that God's love still rested on man, since he provided thus for dispelling his moral darkness; and, in the fact that the precept was thus repeated, man had an assurance that the curse was not yet endowed with the sceptre. The offices of the law, thus given, are several. (1.) It constitutes a new revelation of the divine perfections, which had before shone immediately on the soul, in unveiled radiance and beauty. That revelation being lost, and its light extinguished, God gives it here anew, in a form and permanence which are independent of the blinded mind and perverse will of fallen man. As such, its instructions and provisions are paramount. They supersede any obscure traces which may still remain of the law written in the heart, in its office as a standard of reference by which to put a difference between the holy and unholy, the pure and the vile. (2.) It is a reassertion and enforcement of God's sovereignty, unimpaired by man's treason and rebellion. In this capacity it comes with precisely the same authority which was at first pos-



assed by the law in the heart,—to wit, the absolute authority of God, the Creator. This, its supreme authority, is attested and sealed by conscience, God's minister sitting in the heart. (3.) It is given to make sin inexcusable,—to discover and convict in its true enormity the depravity, which, in the ungodly, otherwise lies undiscovered. This it does in two ways. It exposes the evil of the deeds of men, by comparison with its requirements; and it arouses the depravity of the heart into action, by presenting before it the image of that Holy One whom the carnal nature instinctively hates. By the hostility thus aroused, it is detected and exposed, in its true character, as enmity against God. "The law entered that the offence might abound." "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."—Rom. v. 20, vii. 11. This it does, not by efficiently causing, but by drawing out, and condemning, sin. (4.) It serves as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; and this, alike as its terrors constitute a scourge of conviction, attesting to us our need of a mediator; and as its instructions testify of Him, by whom all its precepts are fulfilled, and its curse satisfied. (5.) It, further, is a sanctifying agent to the people of Christ. It serves as a guide to lead their feet through the darkness of this world to the light of heaven. This it does, not by its scourge of terrors, but by detecting and exposing to their abhorrence, the corruptions which remain in them; and by the exhibition to their faith of the beauty of God's holiness. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.

We have said that the very reannouncement of the law to fallen man, was a pledge of grace. Nor is it a ground of delusive confidence. It is true, that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. It is faith that justifies. And yet, not faith, but that perfect obedience which it pleads;—that spotless righteousness of One, behind whom faith hides alike itself and the sinner. As Immanuel appears at the tribunal of justice, and bows to the stroke of the curse, the law shines forth in new

honour by his obedience until death; and justice smiles in perfect satisfaction, and adorns the ungodly in robes of attested innocence, and garlands of paradise. Thus is the believer justified,—not by a legal righteousness, as of his own performing; and yet, by a righteousness the merit of which is in its conformity to the law; and whose acceptance is at its bar, on the ground of a complete satisfaction to all its claims; the righteousness of another, even of Jesus Christ, who was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. Thus the holiness of God is illustrated, and his justice maintained; the eternal authority of the royal law is vindicated, and its honour restored; whilst, by its award, the ungodly are justified, and sinners enthroned as sons of God. "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom. xi. 33.





## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PRINCIPLE OF THE LAW.

WHILST the eternal power and Godhead of the Most High are clearly seen in the things that are made, the Scriptures announce to us another class of divine attributes, of which the mere works of creation, as such, contain no trace; and which no amount of merely intellectual capacity and research could either discover or apprehend. They are enumerated and described in the Scriptures under various designations, such as, wisdom, righteousness, justice, truth, goodness, love and mercy. The consummate designation in which these all are comprehended is, holiness; and God, as possessed of these attributes, announces himself as he "whose name is, Holy." These various titles are not intended to designate characteristics peculiar to the creative and providential working of God; nor accidents merely of the divine subsistence; but ineffable harmonies, which are essential, eternal and unchangeable in the very being and essence of the Triune God. These attributes, as they are essential in the nature of the I AM, must of necessity have their proper relation to, and termination in, God himself. If love, for example, be so essential in God, that the Scriptures declare that "God is love," it follows that there is a sphere in the divine nature appropriate to the exercise of love, even though the creation had never been formed, nor man experienced the riches of redeeming grace. Further, these attributes are all characteristic of relations of community. Righteousness, truth, justice, goodness, love,—all these are indicative of moral relations between parties; and, since they are essential in the divine nature, they attest the essential and necessary plurality of the divine subsistence. Having their fundamental

basis in the unity of the divine essence, their essential position is in the sphere of the relations which subsist between the Persons of the Godhead. Of the inscrutable and adorable moral relations thus indicated, the Scriptures give many intimations. The most signal and interesting of these consist in the covenant provisions, which were eternally made by the Godhead, for the revelation of the divine glories, in creation and providence, and especially in the salvation of man. Of that eternal covenant, we shall hereafter speak particularly. It is sufficient, here, to remark, that its formation is only explicable upon the admission that the Persons of the Godhead do sustain toward each other relations such as we have attributed to them;—that the announcement to us of such a covenant is manifestly designed to make known to us these relations;—that the infallible fulfilment of its terms we are taught to expect, upon the ground of the faithfulness of the several Persons, as pledged in it to the relations thus revealed; and that every element in the covenant, and step in its fulfilment, tends to the unfolding and illustration of them.

The student of the nature of God, who should pause with the doctrine of the unity of the divine essence, would deprive himself of access to any but the natural attributes of the infinite Spirit. Viewing God in the single light of his indivisible essence, there is no basis upon which we can arrive at the discovery of any other characteristics than such as belong to boundless power and intelligence,—such as self-existence, immensity, omnipotence, eternity, omniscience, mechanical ingenuity and skill,—the attributes of an infinite artificer. It is not until the doctrine of the Trinity is recognised that we discover any ground upon which we can ascribe moral attributes to God, as essential in him; or attach any meaning to the phraseology in which such ascriptions are made. He who denies the doctrine of the Trinity may, notwithstanding, attribute a moral nature to the Almighty. But what idea can we attach to the title, righteous, as applied to One who, a simple unit, fills an eternal solitude? What is meant by calling him, true, who has no communion with any; as there is no existence beside him? It may be said that God



is righteous and true in his dealings with his creatures. But the recognition of any attribute in God, the termination of which is necessarily in the creatures, forces us to the conclusion that the creation is necessary to him; so, denying his independence, and, therefore, his infinitude and Godhead; or else compels us to admit the supposed attribute to be a mere accident of the Creator's voluntary relation to his works; and, therefore, not predicable of the divine essence. The stoical doctrine of the relation of Jove to Fate, is a common resource, to escape from the difficulty here suggested. The theory of "the nature of things," which we have before considered, is only pagan stoicism modernized, and assuming a more specious name. The doctrine, however false, and deistical in its elements and tendencies, is so far valuable, as it attests the necessity which the soul of man realizes, for a plurality, in order to a moral nature in God;—a necessity which induces the ascription of divine attributes to something else than God himself; be it known as Fate, or the Nature of Things, the Eternal Principles, or whatever else. If the theory is sometimes held by those who in terms recognise the Trinity, its logical relations are none the less certain; and it will be found ordinarily associated, in such cases, with exceedingly inadequate conceptions of the true doctrine of the Triune God. The ascription of moral attributes to God, implies relations,—implies community. And if the attributes belong to his essence, so must the relations and community which they imply. Thus, the doctrine of the divine unity, comprehending with it the natural attributes, constitutes the vestibule of the temple of divine truth, in which the revelation goes no further than is sufficient to attest of God, *that He is*. The doctrine of the Trinity is the door, through which entering, we see unfolding the inner mysteries of God, the moral glories of the divine nature; in which is contained the full response to the question, *what He is*,—to wit, a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

The moral attributes of the divine nature, as essential in it, and exercised between the divine Persons, constitute the ground of the infinite blessedness of God. Of this we have intimation

in many places in the Scriptures. Thus, in a passage to which we have already given special consideration, the Son of God says, in respect to the eternity which was before the creation, "Then I was by him (the Father), as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."—Prov. viii. 30. In the prayer which closed his ministry upon earth, the Redeemer says to the Father, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John xvii. 5. Here, the Son alludes to a glory enjoyed by him, arising out of voluntary though eternal moral relations between him and the Father. So, the first expression, given by the Son to his consent to undertake for man, is in terms of infinite love to the Father, and complacency in his will:—"Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."—Ps. xl. 7, 8. This language, is undoubtedly characteristic of the Son as incarnate. But, as it is indicative of the reason of the assumption of the flesh, it applies more immediately to his antecedent state. On the other hand, "the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."—John iii. 35.

The attributes, thus essential in the nature of God,—thus characteristic of him as the Triune,—thus inscrutably exercised *among those blessed Persons, in ineffable harmonies rise in them.* and infinite blessedness and glory,—are regarded with an infinite complacency and delight by that glorious One, in whom they thus dwell. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness."—Psalm xi. 7. And the discovery and honour of these moral perfections was the principal end had in view, in the whole plan and work of God. This appears very clearly attested, in that remarkable revelation which was made by God to Moses, at Mount Sinai. Moses asked the Lord, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and





thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen."—Ex. xxxiii. 18-23. In fulfilment of this promise, "the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."—Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Thus did God proclaim to Moses, the moral perfections of his nature, as being the highest glories of the Godhead which creature is capable to apprehend.

Further, Moses is here assured that, as to the essential glory of God,—that ineffable unity, harmony and love which subsist between the Persons, by virtue of their common subsistence in the one divine essence,—that glory which the blessed Three behold in each other and realize in themselves,—it is beyond the power of mortal vision. "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see."—1 Tim. vi. 16. Not the face, but the back parts of Jehovah are revealed to the adoration of Moses and the people of God. The perfections of God are not made known in their essential aspect. If thus disclosed, either would they be altogether unintelligible to the creatures, or else finite powers must fail, and the beholders must wither and perish, under the consuming power of the intolerable light. Hence, the creatures are not called upon to behold them in the light of their own native glory, as it shines with infinite brightness from God's immediate face; but in the modified light derived from the relations which he has seen good to assume to his intelligent creatures in the person of the Son: "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father—God manifested in the flesh—he hath declared him." In his person, God is proclaimed to the creatures, "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."

These attributes constitute "a shadow" of the essential glories which they proclaim, "and not the very image of the things."

The excellence of the perfections, thus proclaimed to the creatures, as constituting the highest glory of God, does not consist in conformity to any extrinsic standard, nor in essential nature and evidence. obedience to any law, or rule, binding as a principle of duty or obligation. The ultimate cause of this excellence is the essence of God; beyond which there is no existence, whether of principle or being; and above which there is no law; upon which, therefore, there can be no obligation. And the perfection of the several Persons of the Godhead—the excellence which they see in each other, and reveal to the creatures—does not consist in mutual conformity to any extrinsic law or rule of duty, as toward each other; which would be, to suppose them, not only several, in person, but in essence also; and subordinate to some superior authority. On the contrary, the light which is shed upon this ineffable mystery, in the word of God, reveals it as consisting in that perfect harmony,—that unanimity in thought, purpose and action,—that equal mutual love, delight in each other's glory, and community in it,—which results immediately and of necessity from the fact that in essence they are One, and that One is Love. It would be absurd, to talk of the hand, as being bound in a moral obligation to the head, or other member of the body, to protect or provide for it. The relation of the members of the body, as between themselves, is not one of law and moral obligation; but of identity in the body, and community of interest. Much more absurd is it, to imagine one Person of the blessed Godhead, bound under any essential obligation of duty, as toward another. The relations are not those arising out of law, and enforced at its tribunal; but relations of identity, which are sustained and satisfied by the perfect mutual confidence and trust, resulting from oneness of glory and blessedness, will and power, founded in absolute oneness of essence and Godhead. In other words, the law, the only law, of the relations of the several Persons to each other, is, the unity of their essence, the oneness of the Deity. But "no man hath seen God at any time." And, whilst thus much is



clearly attested by the Scriptures, and therefore to be received by the people of God; it becomes us, here, to stand in awe, admire and adore; rather than curiously to inquire. Said the Angel to Manoa, "Why askest thou my name, seeing it is secret?"—Judg. xiii. 18.

The infinite excellence of the divine perfections constitutes at once the ultimate fact, in all true moral science, and the first principle in all sound argument on moral questions. And, like all other ultimate truths, whilst it asserts a rightful control over all moral reasoning, it claims independence of all; and demands acceptance and the sceptre in its own right. God's perfection is above all argument, as his nature is above all comprehension. Its evidence consists in the fact that it is the sum of the attributes of the I AM. It is attested by the Three that bear record in heaven, who glory in that perfection. It is attested by all the blessed hosts of heaven, who admire and adore the beauties which they behold in the nature of God! It is acknowledged by the reluctant tribute of man's alien heart. It is verified by the exulting joy and praise of Christ's redeemed people; who, the more they learn to appreciate it, admire and rejoice the more. The hostility of God's enemies, even, testifies to his excellence; as in them the fact is seen, that none but the malignant and the vile, who are at war with their own natures as much as with God, doubt or question his perfection. To the creatures, it cannot rationally be a question, whether the attributes of the Creator are infinitely excellent. He is the creative I AM, the ALL IN ALL. As such, the intelligent creatures discover, in his nature, the norm of their being,—the complement of their capacities,—the life in whom they live and move and have their being,—the source of all good and fountain of pleasure and blessedness, in whose presence and smile there must be to them fulness of joy. Nothing but the enormous evil and power of sin over the soul can explain the fact that a question should ever be raised on this fundamental point. Nothing but atheism can grow out of the fearful skepticism which cavils here. To him who hesitates on this subject there is no God, and the universe is one fearful moral abyss, whelming the soul, over which clouds and thick dark-

ness gather their gloom. No wonder that, with the principles on this subject which Dr. Beecher propounds, he should have realized the dark and distressful experience of which he speaks in his chapter on "The eclipse of the glory of God."\* Alas! that he should have failed to detect the real cause and to seek the true and only remedy. It consists in the unquestioning faith of a little child.

The fundamental aspect, in which the revealed attributes of the divine nature present themselves, is, as an outshining of God's perfections; for the purpose of being apprehended by the creatures, in their own proper beauty and loveliness. The end accomplished, thus, is twofold;—the honour of those perfections, as thus seen and admired by the creatures;—and the happiness of the creatures; to whom the highest blessedness must arise, from the simple apprehension of these admirable features of their glorious Creator. These results flow natively and immediately from the perception of the divine glory, by the intelligent creatures; in whatever mode it is discovered; whether by more or less immediate intuition, or through more remote reflection from the works of God. And it is altogether conceivable that the intelligent creatures might have been so constituted and endowed by the Creator, as to have apprehended and rejoiced in the glory thus revealed, as in itself worthy of all admiration, for its beauty and propriety to God,—without realizing any obligation to imitate it; or sustaining any such relations or possessing such attributes as to render the imitation possible. Evidently, that sense of obligation which we realize, impelling us to the imitation of God's perfections, does not result, immediately and of necessity, from the mere fact that we are endowed with an apprehension of them; but is superadded by God, as a distinct element in the means which he has provided, for the display of his own glory and the happiness of the creatures. It is true that to us, as now constituted, the apprehension does bring with it a corresponding obligation. But the two elements are clearly

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\* Beecher's Conflict of Ages, chap. xiii.





traceable to different springs. Had God not enjoined upon the creatures the imitation of what they see in him, but left them to their own discretion, there would have been a propriety, a fitness and beauty, in the imitation; but no obligation, no binding authority. The propriety and beauty of holiness arise out of the *nature* of the Holy One. The duty implies obligation, authority; and arises from the *will* of the sovereign Creator. By endowing the moral intelligences with attributes, and placing them in relations, adapted to the imitation of his moral character, and planting in their bosoms a sense of the obligation and duty of such imitation, the Creator has provided, in a most wonderful manner, for his own glory and the good of the creatures. His glory is enhanced, as, in every moral intelligence, its likeness is shed abroad and beheld by all; and as, thereby, his goodness is especially illustrated, in the consequent happiness which they realize. They are thus blessed, not only in beholding the images, which, all around, shine in the beauty of the Creator's likeness; but also, as, in the imitation of the moral nature of God, they realize a happiness like that which is essential in him, by virtue of his glorious holiness.

In the adaptation of the created intelligences to offices and ends such as are here indicated, the elements in their constitutions, which are of the most significance, as relating to the present subject, are, their moral natures, and personality. The word, *nature*, we have formerly defined to be the designation of a permanent force, dwelling in a substance. A moral nature is one, the essential characteristics of which are reason, will, and the moral sense, or conscience. The functions of conscience, as we have also seen, are two. Its first and fundamental office is the perception of that moral beauty and glory which characterize the moral nature of God,—the apprehension of the loveliness of holiness, and deformity and evil of sin. Viewed in this light, this faculty is properly designated, the moral sense; and is predicable, in a certain sense, of God, as well as of the creatures. The second is, the recognition of the duty and obligation of conformity to the holiness, the beauty of which is thus discovered, and of avoiding the opposite. In this sense, conscience

is the attestation, in the heart, to the controlling authority of God's will; and is peculiar to the creatures. The proper subject of a moral nature is a spiritual substance. In no other mode have we any reason to imagine it possible for it to exist at all.

A person, is a several subsistence, which is endowed with a moral nature. The word, person, is expressive of the severalty; whilst the phrase, moral agent, indicates the efficiency of such a subsistence. In the blessed Trinity, each several subsistence is a Person; of whom, the Three subsist in common in one undivided nature and essence. Among the angelic hosts, each one is a several person, having a distinct and several nature. Among men, a nearer likeness of God is seen, in a plurality of persons, possessing a several and distributive property in one common nature; whilst their kindred to the dust is proclaimed by corporeal bodies; which are unessential to the personality, although essential to the normal mode of its existence. The relationship which subsists between men, by virtue of their community of nature, is a shadow of the divine unity, which falls infinitely short of the intimacy and identity which are realized in the blessed Persons of the Godhead. Yet is it a very signal element in the matter of man's moral likeness to God. It constitutes an adaptation qualifying him to imitate the divine perfections, by the fulfilment of the offices growing out of the relation. It is a feature in which man is thus distinguished above the angels. And its counterpart and antitype—the unity of the saints, by communion in one Spirit, and membership in one body, the body of Christ—will constitute the crowning glory of all the splendours of heaven.

From the facts and considerations at which we have thus glanced, we derive this conclusion,—that the law is not to be regarded as an expression of the mere will of God, adapted, on the principles of expediency, to our antecedent estate; nor, on the other hand, as the embodiment of principles in accordance with which God is bound, if he create, to govern, his rational creatures. But, God having, in sovereignty and freedom, determined to reveal his own perfections, the creatures were formed with moral endowments and relations, for the express





purpose of fitting them to correspond with and satisfy the requirements of a law, in which the perfections of God should be set forth. The law takes the precedence; it is first in the order of nature; and is determinate of what the creatures should be. It was not ordained for man, or any other creature. But they were made for it,—for the exhibition of the attributes, which, essential in God, are revealed in the law.

The principles here presented further indicate at once the reason, the propriety and the principle of the law of God. Its principle is, conformity to the moral nature of God; its reason is, the revelation of the glory of that nature; and its propriety consists in the excellence of the perfections thus honoured, and the fitness there is that the creatures of God should concur to his glory. That the principle of the law is, as here stated, conformity of the creatures to God's moral image, the testimony of the Scriptures is abundant. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."—Rom. vii. 12. And, being so, its reason is stated in those words of God,—“Be ye holy, for I am holy.”—1 Pet. i. 16. Again, John declares that “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him;”—1 John iv. 16; and, such being the case, the law, as expounded by our Saviour, is summed in two words:—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”—Matt. xxii. 37–40. And, reducing these all to one precept, Paul comprehends the whole law in one word:—“Love is the fulfilling of the law.”—Rom. xiii. 10. This principle of conformity to God, is, by the Saviour, put at the basis of his whole teaching, in that discourse on the mount which closes an exposition of the true nature and spirituality of the law of God, in these terms:—“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye

§ 5. The principle thus deduced.

may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”—Matt. v. 43–48. Thus the perfection of God is the standard and model set up for our example and imitation in the law.

Whilst, therefore, we have seen the authority of the law of God to rest solely upon the unquestionable and unlimited right of God as Creator, its principle originates in the infinite excellence of the nature of God the Holy, the God of love. As we have already suggested, and is self-evident, it is altogether conceivable, and to God possible, that he should have created beings competent to behold and admire, but not to imitate, the perfections of the Creator. It is, therefore, certain that the duty of imitation does not arise of necessity and *per se*, out of the beholding them. And it is equally certain from the testimony of the Scriptures, as considered in the last chapter, that the obligation does, in fact, grow out of the sovereign will of the Creator. That will, as contained in the law written in the heart and attested by conscience, is the ultimate ground of all moral obligation, the ultimate test of duty, to the creatures. On the other hand, inasmuch as God's will cannot but be, as he is, holy, as it is nothing but expression given to the perfections of his nature, it follows, that whatever God commands us must be most holy and excellent.

The defenders of the authority of the nature of things are accustomed to insist, that a rejection of it involves the conclusion, that there is no intrinsic difference between holiness and sin,—that they are only discriminated by the fact, that the one is commanded and the other forbidden. If there be indeed no other distinction than that which proceeds from the nature of things, then, truly, is there no essential difference. For, as the nature of things is neither a god nor even a creature, it is impossible that any thing should proceed from it. But, if men are willing to attribute a sovereignty over the whole moral system to such a nothing as is this,—why is it not more reasonable to attribute it, where most righteously it belongs, to that infi-



nite, self-existent, eternal and all-glorious Essence, from whom—if it be any thing at all—even the nature of things, with all things else, must have derived existence? Is it absurd to suppose the moral nature of God, which is nothing else but his very essence, to be self-existent, independent, determinate and unchangeable? Is it absurd or untrue to attribute to it, as such, infinite excellence,—excellence, not relative, but absolute; not ascertained by reference to any other standard, but in and of itself? If this be absurd, it must be equally so, in respect to any imaginable standard of excellence; and the result is, that, there being nothing excellent, in itself, there can be no standard; and hence no excellence at all!

But, if God's nature be, as unquestionably it is, in and of itself absolutely excellent, infinitely good, then have we a distinction, real, essential and infinite, between moral good and evil. The one is the essential glory of the blessed God. The other is the negative of God! Thus have we an abundantly satisfactory solution of those tremendous realities, which eternity is destined to unfold, dependent on the difference between good and evil, between the likeness of God, and that which he hates.

The transcription of the law from the nature of God, is that which constitutes its excellence; on which the Scriptures so largely expatiate. Addressed to a moral sense, with which the created intelligences were endowed, for the express purpose of enabling them to apprehend the moral glory of God,—it is a perfect revelation of that glory. In thus speaking, we view the law as inclusive of its sanctions, as well as precepts. Both the penalty, and that promise which constitutes it a covenant of life, are parts of the law. Although neither of them is essential to law, as such, they are both—the promise as much as the penalty—incorporated, as essential elements of that law which God has given to his creatures, as a revelation of his holiness, goodness and justice. Whilst the imperative utterance of its precepts announces the rightful sovereignty of the creative I AM,—their provisions proclaim his purity and holiness, and his abhorrence of evil; the penalty attests his infinite justice, which will reward the evil according to their

§ 8. It is a perfect revelation.

deeds; and the promise proclaims his boundless goodness and love, lavishing favours, not in proportion to the merits of the creatures, but according to the beneficence of a God. Again, these various attributes are illustrated in the lives of the creatures, as seen in the light of the law. The beauty of God's holiness shines in the holiness of those who walk in conformity to the law;—his blessedness, in the happiness which they enjoy, springing out of their holiness;—and his goodness, in this and the added blessedness which they realize in his smile, and from the exercise toward them of his loving power. Yet more glorious does that holiness appear, as it is contrasted with the wickedness of those who transgress the law; and the terrible majesty of his justice is seen, in the punishment which, denounced in the law, is inflicted by the hand of the righteous Judge. Especially in Christ do all these things shine in ineffable lustre. Humbling himself to become a servant to the law, its royal authority was thus proclaimed. His life of holy conformity to its precept constituted him an ensample, in whom its perfection, and that of him whom it proclaims, is seen. His agonizing death, under its overwhelming curse, was an astonishing display of God's inexorable justice; and, at the same time, the compassion toward sinners, which the scene of Calvary attests, and the infliction, which, at the demand of the law, was laid upon the Son of God's love, join to witness, that God's justice, pursuing sin, fearful though it be, is infinitely removed from what we might imagine, as the revenging fury of incensed Omnipotence. They proclaim, in unmistakable terms, the penal infliction of God's curse to be the exercise of a holy rectitude of One who, enthroned in calm tranquillity, far above the strife of creature passion, will, in pure and unchanging justice, render the reward due to every creature.

In fine, this holy and eternal law will occupy the throne at the last great day. Its decree will proclaim the holiness, the truth and justice, the goodness and love, of God, assigning to every creature the righteous award; and, when that dread assize shall be over, by the power of Omnipotence will every word of its decrees be fulfilled. Whilst the promise of the covenant heralds the saints to heaven, the sword of the curse will





pursue the wicked to hell. In that world of woe, the law fills the throne. The blackness of darkness is the horror of its frown. A fiery wrath is its only sanction; and the thunders of the curse are its only tones. It testifies, there, in the unwilling ears of the lost, and to the awe-struck gaze of heaven's blessed inhabitants, that God is sovereign and omnipotent; that he is holy; that he is true, and unchangeable, and just. In heaven, too, the law will reign supreme, forever. No longer clothed in the form of extrinsic precepts, its principle will shine forth in the unveiled glories of God; whom we now see through its glass darkly, but then shall see face to face. And they who behold will be like him, because they shall see him as he is. Yet the law which reigns in heaven, though the same, is not the same. There, as God's people, so, his law, is transformed. Its unchangeable holiness remains. Its faithful exhibition of God's perfections remains. Nay, it there consists in the unveiling of those very perfections,—the unclouded light of God's own face. But it rules not, there, in the guise of a master. It wields not, there, the scourge of terror; nor deals in the notes of threatening. It speaks not even with the sternness of authority. "We are free from the law, by the body of Christ." It has no curse to utter; no scourge to wield. Its only sanctions are the smiles of God. Its only power is love.

Thus does the law constitute the basis and medium of all we know or can know of God; the reason and cause of all we can suffer in hell, and the spring and pledge of growing knowledge and blessedness in heaven. Truly, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter, also, than honey, and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."—Psalm xix. 7-11.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE NATURE OF SIN.

"SIN is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God."\* Perhaps no more signal illustration could be given. *Sin* is named of the extent of man's apostasy from God, *unlawfulness*. than occurs in the superficial and false conceptions which are prevalent on the nature and evil of sin. Nor are these false opinions confined to the ignorant and the thoughtless. "What is sin?" says Pelagius. "Is it a substance at all? or a name to which there is no substance, and by which is expressed, not a thing, not an existence or bodily substance, but the performance of a bad act? I believe this is the case."† "Sin," says a disciple of the same theology, "in every form and instance, is reducible to the act of a moral agent, in which he violates a known rule of duty."‡

There are a number of words used in the Scriptures, to signify sin. Thus, *חטא*, a missing the mark; *פשוט*, a turning out of the way; *עבר*, a passing over the line; *קם*, rebellion; *שׁוּב*, a turning aside. In the New Testament, *ἀμαρτία*, a missing the mark; *ἀνομία*, unlawfulness; *παράβασις*, a passing over the line; *παράωχ*, disobedience; *παρὰπτωμα*, a stumbling or falling out of the path. In all cases, the words point to a standard of rectitude, from which departure takes place. In respect to those things to which the name of sin is applied, the following points are clearly taught in the Scriptures.

1. There cannot be sin where there is no moral law, no principle of moral obligation. This is distinctly asserted by Paul:—"Where no law is, there is no transgression."—Rom. iv. 15.

\* Shorter Catechism, Qu. 14.

† Wiggers' Augustinism and Pelagianism, Andover, p. 132.

‡ Fitch's Discourses on the Nature of Sin. New Haven, 1826, p. 4.



"Sin is not imputed where there is no law."—Rom. v. 13. "By the law is the knowledge of sin."—Rom. iii. 20. The same principle is implied in the scriptures which are cited under the following heads, and will not be questioned.

2. Wherever there is moral law,—wherever creature is held under bonds of moral obligation to God,—in whatever form the law is enacted and put forth,—any failure of perfect conformity to it, is sin; whether the defect be in the form of transgression of the prohibitions; or in failure of perfect conformity to the requirements. "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law: for sin is transgression of the law." Literally, "Whosoever sins, commits unlawfulness; for sin is unlawfulness."—1 John iii. 4. "All unrighteousness (*adikia*, deflection from the rule) is sin."—1 John v. 17. Not only does this apply to active violations of the precept; but to any coming short of its requirements. This is not only involved in the preceding scriptures, but is further asserted in many places. Thus, says James, "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."—James iv. 17. And Paul declares, that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."—Rom. xiv. 23.

3. Not only is the name, sin, applied to actions, in the Scriptures, but it is also used as the designation of an efficient principle in the soul, which is the cause of deeds of transgression. Says Paul to the Romans, "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."—Rom. vi. 12. This conception of sin runs through the whole of the discussion contained in the sixth and seventh chapters of that epistle; to the exegesis of which special attention will be given in another place.

In order to an intelligent application of the general principles here stated, it is requisite to notice two or three of those features of God's likeness, in which the moral intelligences were clothed. The first of these, is the fact that they are, to each other, inscrutable; as respects any direct or immediate discovery or perception of the moral nature, its attributes and attitude. Hence, the inquiry of Paul, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the

§ 2. Phenomena of moral nature.

spirit of man, which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."—1 Cor. ii. 11. It is only mediately that one created intelligence can come to any knowledge of the moral posture and the essential attributes of another.

Another point to be noticed, is the relation of resemblance which the nature of moral agents bears to the essential perfection of God. That perfection consists in the holiness which is eternal in him, independent of, and prior to, the first act of creation. After that likeness, the moral intelligences were created; with attributes and powers, not only resembling God, in numerical order and functions, but placed in attitudes of moral correspondence and harmony with those of God. Herein is the essential and fundamental likeness of God, in which they were clothed. And herein is the basis of a moral character; of which, as we shall presently see, their actions are the faithful indices; but which is altogether independent of action, antecedent to it, and the cause of its moral character.

Of the fact, that the moral intelligences are thus constituted, the evidence is demonstrative. We have elsewhere seen, that the attributes of man's nature sustain specific and definable relations, to external nature, to his fellows, and to God. Of them, not only is action predicable; but affinity or attitude also. They may, they do, occupy attitudes so determinate,—they have affinities so precise,—that, in consequence, their first active impulses will infallibly and necessarily be in a given direction, and in no other. Thus, Adam, when created, before the first exertion of the powers of his nature, was, by his Maker, so constituted, that all his powers should spontaneously move, in conformity with God's law of holiness. The character of his first acts was in no sense contingent; but determined by the attitude in which his Maker arrayed the powers of his soul,—the affinities which he enstamped upon it. This is what is intimated, when the Holy Spirit says, that "God made man upright." On the contrary, equally certain are the first actings of each soul, now born into the world, to be in antagonism to God, and transgression of his law;—and this, for the like reason,—that, in





consequence of the fall, the attitude of the powers of the soul is changed. They are directed away from God, instead of being concentrated upon him. The positions thus stated are so nearly self-evident, as scarcely to admit of argument. It is universally and intuitively felt, that there is something back of the very first active impulse of the soul; which determines the character and direction of that impulse. No one supposes, for example, that the past parsimonious acts of the miser constitute the cause of the fact that he will be a miser still. Those are the mere proofs, which testify that his nature is such, that he will act in a given way. No one doubts for one moment, when a child is born, whether it will be of itself disposed to evil. All feel that there is, from the first, something in its nature, which determines the question, prior to any experiment. Further, it is no numerical change in man's powers, which makes the difference between Adam, whose nature was holy, and his children, who are by nature unholy. The fall did not reduce the number of the powers of man's nature, nor change their order in respect to each other. Nor does regeneration increase them, nor modify that order. But, in the one case, the process was a transformation of the affinities of the nature,—an apostasy of the soul,—a turning away, *en masse*, of the whole body of powers from God. And, in regeneration, there is a restoration of those powers to their original position,—a turning of them back, and direction of them again to God, as the true centre of their attraction.

The phrase, "turning away," or apostasy, is that which the Scriptures habitually use, to express the perversity of man, and his spontaneous attitude of enmity toward God; and the resumption of a right position, is expressed in corresponding terms. "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"—Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts."—Mal. iii. 7. "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God."—1 Thess. i. 9. What is the precise and intimate nature of that characteristic of the human soul, upon which the forms of expression thus employed are dependent, we do not know. Experience and Scripture con-

cur, however, in testifying that it is such as to determine, infallibly, the direction in which the active powers of the soul will spontaneously move. The engine, which rushes impetuously along the track, will move with equal certainty and power in the opposite direction, if its attitude be reversed; although the motive power and the relative position of the parts of the machinery, as toward each other, are precisely the same. So much we know, in respect to the soul;—that, as created, all its actions flowed in spontaneous harmony and affinity with the law and nature of God; whilst, as fallen, they, as certainly and powerfully, turn away. Further, we have the unambiguous and unequivocal testimony of the Spirit of God, that the soul is the responsible cause of the transgression and sin, thus arising. Thus, Jesus says to the Pharisees, "O generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."—Matt. xii. 34, 35. And again, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man."—Matt. xv. 19, 20. Says James, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, bringeth forth sin."—James i. 14, 15.

The next point, here to be noticed, is the fact, that the moral natures of the creatures, thus determinate in their attitude, were endowed with a causative power, from which result effects correspondent to the cause. This has, in fact, been assumed, and illustrated sufficiently, in what has just been said. It is only now named, as entitled to distinct and emphatic recognition; and for the purpose of pointing out the principle, in accordance with which the causation of moral natures operates. That principle is,—that, as is the cause, such must be the effects; and hence, from the character of the effects, may the nature of the cause be infallibly learned. It is by means of this principle that God has seen good to reveal himself, in his works; all of which, in their perfection, testify to the perfection of their





author. As he has filled the universe with motion, giving to all the creatures forces, that constitute them the causes of ever varying phenomena, which shed forth and proclaim the ceaseless activity and beneficence of the unwearied Creator; so has he, in an especial manner, endowed man's moral nature with that causative force, which impels him to actions, bearing the moral impress of his nature. Thus, the intelligent creatures come to a mutual knowledge of themselves, by means of their actions; through which they recognise, in each other, images of the Creator's activity, and likenesses of his moral attributes,—mirrors designed to reflect his spotless holiness. In fact, the distinctive office of action is revelation,—the making known of the agent. Thus, God is discovered to the creatures, by the works of his hand; and they, to each other, by their actions, severally. Hence, all effects are traceable, at last, to the intelligent efficiency of moral agents; and the moral character of any given act is that of the moral agent, from whom it proceeds. It is in view of this characteristic of human nature, that our Saviour lays down the canon of judgment, by which the church is to try those that come to her as teachers:—"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."—Matt. vii. 15-20.

Herein is the importance which attaches to human actions;—not that there is in them any intrinsic value; but, as they are indices to the character of men's nature, and the attitude of their souls. They are the means through which, in sustained allegiance, the creatures shed upon each other their Maker's image, and attest his glory. And they constitute the evidence to each other as to the question,—whether they are faithful to the office with which they are honoured,—whether their nature continues true to the allegiance of Him with whose likeness they are endowed, and with whose honour they are intrusted.

In connection with such an endowment, the creatures on whom it was bestowed were bound, under an obligation proportionably strong,—that is to say, of infinite authority,—to fulfil the office thus assigned them, and honour and serve Him by whom they were created such. That obligation is engraven in the nature, and attested by conscience. Such an obligation, being moral, and addressing the moral nature, implies the original investiture of the nature with a freedom, implying power to continue in the attitude of harmony with the divine nature; or, to turn away, and assume an attitude of antagonism to God. From all this, it inevitably follows, that all the responsibilities and obligations, which can, in any conceivable way, attach to a person, must have their ground in the nature, and attach themselves essentially to it. Since, in general, every kind of obligation implies the exercise of some kind of efficiency, and since the moral nature is the only principle of moral efficiency, in a person, it follows, that all moral obligations must lay hold of the nature; else are they altogether nugatory and void. Furthermore, we have seen the ultimate principle of all moral obligation to be, conformity to God. We have seen man's moral nature to have been formed for the express purpose of being God's likeness; especially, in his moral attributes,—in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. Since, therefore, it is evident that nothing which is extrinsic or formal can be in the moral likeness of that holy and incomprehensible Spirit, it follows, that all obligation—as it implies a requirement to conform to the moral likeness of God—must address that, from which only the features of that likeness can flow,—the nature of the agent. The same conclusion results from yet another line of thought. The attributes, by which a moral agent is capable of recognising, appreciating and fulfilling the obligations which are addressed to him, are reason, conscience and the will. But these, although existent in the spiritual substance of the moral agent, are not parts of it, but characteristics of the nature, which dwells in the substance. Hence, as the claims of the Creator not only appeal to the nature, but are cognizable by it alone, it is manifest that upon it their obligations rest.



Whilst, thus, all moral obligations arise out of the constitution of the nature, and lay hold, essentially, upon it, the subject against which they are enforced, is the person in which the nature subsists; and this for evident reasons. It is only in the form of a person that a moral nature can subsist. All that is proper to the person, or in any way characteristic of it as such, grows out of the nature, and is designed and constructed as a means for the activity of the nature; so that the person is but the nature embodied in a form adapted to its efficient action. It is the organization through which the nature may meet its responsibilities, by performing the duties demanded of it. Since, therefore, the nature can neither exist, nor, therefore, be responsible, neither recognise nor satisfy its responsibilities, but as it is embodied in a person; and since to it, as thus embodied, the obligations which rest upon it, are for this reason by God addressed, it follows that persons are the immediate and only subjects of moral law and responsibility. The nature comprehends all the forces which are proper to the person in which it subsists. Among these are not only included those of which obligation or obedience may be supposed, but those susceptibilities upon which may be predicated the realization of suffering, the endurance of punishment. There is, therefore, nothing in the person of which exemption can be imagined, as apart from the nature. Were it possible to take away the nature and yet the person remain;—were it possible to suppose any other forces proper to the person than all its proper forces,—then would there be room for the conception, that the person might be irresponsible for the nature and have a responsibility distinct from it. But so long as it is true, that the moral nature is that which makes the person what it is in all moral respects; and that the only existence of the nature is in the person; it will follow, that the attempt to separate the obligations of the nature and of the person is absurd and preposterous. The person is bound under the responsibilities which attach to the nature as subsisting therein; and can be held to no others than such as arise thence. The form of the obligation is, indeed, modified by the accidents of the person; but such accidental forms are always capable of resolution into

general principles, which attach essentially to the nature. Every accidental form, which, in the varying circumstances of life, our duties assume, is capable of being reduced to the one principle of love,—to the one duty of conformity with the likeness of Him of whom it is testified, that God is love; and unless the given duty be performed through the activity of a principle of love, springing in the nature, and thence breathing through the soul, it is not performed at all.

In view of the nature of man as here presented, of the office to which he was ordained, and the responsibilities under which he was held, the law utters its precepts and makes all its provisions. Its office, as we have already shown, is twofold. It is in and of itself a revelation of God's moral nature, and it is a touchstone by the aid of which the intelligent creatures may know themselves and each other, as compared with God. Hence, the terms in which the precepts of the written law are framed, have respect mainly to actual exercises of the powers and affections. These are within the cognizance of the creatures; whilst the attitude of the nature is beyond their immediate scrutiny. These only, therefore, can they compare with the rule; and hence, with these chiefly are the provisions of the law conversant.

And yet, neither the design of the law, nor the language in which it is framed, will admit of restriction to the mere actions of men. The former we have seen to be a revelation of the essential nature of God, by the definitions contained in the law, and by the likeness to him which it discovers in the creatures. Since the moral nature of man was designed to be an image of the essential nature of God, no less than were his actions to illustrate and shadow forth the activity of God, it follows, of necessity, that the only position which man's nature can innocently and rightfully occupy, is that of perfect conformity of attitude and actions to the office thus assigned and the end thus had in view. And, since the law is holy, being a transcript of the nature of the Holy One, and designed to assert the obligation of conformity to his nature and will, it cannot fail to enforce the obligation thus manifest on the very nature and substance of the soul of man.





Its demand cannot be less than that the nature be conformed to God's nature, as well as the actions to his working and his will.

The same conclusion results from the causative relation which we have seen to exist between the nature and actions. It would be preposterous, to enter into argument, to prove, that, when a murder is committed, the crime attaches neither to the wound nor the weapon; but to him who wielded the one and caused the other. So, here, when an act of sin occurs, the crime attaches essentially, neither to the act, nor the volition whence the act proceeded; but to the soul, the cause of both,—the soul, whose perverted powers produced the deed. In fact, every law, whether human or divine, recognises this principle. They all address the soul itself,—the fountain of actions. If any control at all is attempted, it must operate here. If crime is prevented, it must be by controlling the cause,—the nature which generates the crime. Any other course would be the folly of him who should attempt, with the weight of a feather, to stay the ponderous wheel, which moves in obedience to the power put forth by the mighty engine; instead of plying the lever, which, located at the seat of power, controls its direction. The efficient cause of moral action is the proper subject of moral law. This is assumed, in all the divine administration; in which, the sanctions of the law always attach to the soul of the agent. It is a principle of all law, that, if there is guilt, the *corpus delicti*, the crime, is to be sought, not in the act, as such, but in the *animus* of the actor. Men never fail to realize this, in the common transactions of life, and decisions of human jurisprudence. It is only in the perversity of unscriptural theology, that we find the absurdity of separating the moral character from the substance of the soul, and tying it to the vanishing deeds of life.

The idea that responsibility and sin are predicable of actions merely, is only consistent with an utter denial that man's nature as such owes any thing to God; or has an office to perform of showing forth his glory. It implies, that the reason of the law of God, and of the moral obligations, which rest on the creatures, consists in some necessity of the divine nature, to which our

active services are, of themselves, important,—that, provided our actions maintain an aspect of conformity to the rule, our hearts are our own. It ignores the fact, that actions are mere empty phenomena, which can in themselves have no possible value; and which, even to the purposes of revelation, convey to God nothing new, and merely serve to make known, to each other and to themselves, that state of men's nature, and attitude of their souls, which is already and immediately known fully to God. It is to the soul, that moral responsibility attaches, and of which, in the Scriptures, moral good and evil are predicated, even prior to and irrespective of any external exercise of its powers. It is to the very substance of the soul, that the law is addressed; and upon it the penal sanctions of that law are enforced. The soul is that, which, in its substance and powers, intrinsically, as much as in their exercises, was created and ordained to be the image and glory of God. Conformity of this substance to this its exalted office is holiness; the reverse is sin.

The conclusion thus gained corresponds precisely with what has been already shown, as to the comprehensiveness of the authority of the law itself, asserting a jurisdiction, which is described in a laborious accumulation of terms, as comprehending the entire being,—all the heart, soul, mind and strength,—the body and the spirit, which are God's. Whilst the law thus searches out the springs of man's actions, and penetrates to the cause of their moral character, its precept is correspondent to the object to which it is addressed. When it says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength,"—Mark xii. 30,—the injunction lays upon the soul, which is thus in its "all" demanded, a requisition that every power shall maintain an attitude correspondent with, and productive of, perpetual and perfect love and obedience. A failure to conform to this most righteous demand, is sin,—is transgression of the law; and justly involves him in whom it occurs, in all the responsibilities of sin,—God's present frown, and eternal wrath.

Thus, then, does the law of God descend to the fountains of the soul,—the sources of all the phenomena of intellectual and



moral agency; by the nature of which those phenomena are determined to be good or evil, right or wrong. The substance of the soul itself, and all its capacities, were created by God. They all belong to him; and, designed to show his glory, are bound to do so, in their passive attitude as well as in their active state. The precept of the law is unambiguous:—"Be holy, for I the Lord thy God am holy." The requirement is, that not the body only, but the soul,—not the actions only, but the powers,—should be devoted to God,—not by a formal effort of the will merely, but by the spontaneity of the whole being. He is the centre around whom the soul, in its substance, its powers, and all its exercises, should revolve, freely, spontaneously, continually, from the first dawning of existence, forever. His law demands holiness,—a word which does not express any form of mere action, but a state of all the powers, and of the nature, itself, conformed to God's nature. To this law Christ was conformed, from his first conception; and, in being so, illustrated the extent of the requirement of the law, which says, "Be holy." He was, in the womb, "that holy thing." To the law, thus comprehensive in its demands, thus claiming the allegiance of the soul and the nature, as well as the actions and life, want of conformity is sin.

Here, the doctrine of Edwards, on the moral character of actions, presents itself. "One main foundation of the reasons § 5. Edwards' doctrine. which are brought to establish the forementioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, &c., is a supposition that the virtuousness of the dispositions or acts of the will, consists not in the nature of those dispositions or acts, but wholly in the origin or cause of them; so that if the disposition of the mind or act of the will be ever so good, yet if the cause of the disposition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praiseworthy in it; and on the contrary, if the will in its inclination or acts be ever so bad, yet unless it arises from something that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blameworthy in it. . . . Now, if this matter be well considered, it will appear to be altogether a mistake, yea, a gross absurdity." "Thus, for instance, if the vice of a vicious act of will lies not in the nature of the act, but the cause; so that its being of a bad nature will not make

it at all our fault, unless it arises from some faulty determination of ours as its cause, or something in us that is our fault;—then, for the same reason, neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the nature of the thing itself, but in its cause; that evil determination of ours is not our fault, merely because it is of a bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that is our fault; and so on *ad infinitum*.\* This same idea runs through the whole argument, in Edwards' Treatise on Original Sin, Part iv. Chap. i.,—"Concerning that objection, that to suppose men's being born in sin, without their choice, or any previous act of their own, is to suppose what is inconsistent with the nature of sin;" in which chapter he refers his readers, for further light, to the work on the Will, from which we here quote.

The relation of this assumption to Edwards' doctrine of causation, is obvious. If the creature be no cause, there is but one alternative. Either all acts, as caused by the Holy One, are holy; or else, the character of an action is to be sought somewhere else than in its cause. But the argument is a fallacy, involving the latent assumption, that acts have a subsistence and moral agency of their own, apart from that of the actor. Strictly speaking, acts are without any moral character in themselves; they are not subjects of law, responsible to justice. An act is nothing but the agent acting; and when, in common language, we speak of moral attributes attaching to actions, and predicate of them praise or blame, we, in fact, mean to attribute these to the actor. This is as true of those "internal exercises," of which Edwards here speaks, as of outward actions. The reason, therefore, why the moral character of an act is to be sought, not intrinsically in it, but in its cause, is not merely that it is an effect, but, that it is an effect of which the moral nature of an accountable agent is the cause. Moral intelligences alone are responsible; and that by virtue of the causative moral nature which they possess. And the nature, as thus causative, is responsible for the effects which it produces; whether they be developed within, or extrinsic;—whether they be in the form

\* Edwards on the Will, Part iv. sec. 1. See also sec. 9.





of apostasy of the very nature itself; or of dispositions and actions caused by the apostate condition of the nature, and demonstrative of it. Hence, the reason why the moral character of actions is not to be sought in their external form, but in their cause.

In this doctrine of Edwards, and in the whole argument by which it is sustained, we find very distinct intimations of the "exercise scheme," more fully developed by his pupil, Hopkins, that all sin and holiness consist in exercises or actions. In it, too, Emmons found the argument with which he vindicates the position that God is the author of sin. The holiness of the cause does not prevent the sinfulness of the action, since the moral character of the latter is to be sought in its formal aspect, and not in its source. God may, therefore, be the cause of men's sins, although he is the God of holiness.

The general principles thus far presented, apply in common to all moral intelligences. In order, however, to the solution of

§ 6. *Sin of Nature.* the problem of man's nature and the responsibilities under which he lies, it is necessary to take into the account some additional facts not yet mentioned. In the angelic hosts each several individual is possessed of a several nature, original in and peculiar to him. The history of the person and of the nature is contemporaneous and the same. But in man it is different. The nature of the entire race was created originally in Adam, and is propagated from him by generation, and so descends to all his seed. Hence arise two distinct forms of responsibility: the nature being placed under a creative obligation of conformity to the holiness of God's nature, and each several person being, in a similar manner, held under obligation of personal conformity of affections, thoughts, words and actions, to the holy requirements of God's law. The apostasy of this nature was the immediate efficient cause in Adam of the act of disobedience, the plucking of the forbidden fruit. Thus there attached to him the double crime of apostasy of his nature and of personal disobedience. The guilt thus incurred, attached, not only to Adam's person, but to the nature which, in his person, caused the act of transgression. Thus, as the nature flows to all the posterity of Adam, it comes bearing the burden of that initial

crime, and characterized by the depravity which was embraced therein. In both respects the nature is at variance with the law. In both respects it is guilty of sin,—the sin of nature. In addition to this, Adam's posterity find the depravity thus embraced and indwelling, an unfailing and active cause of other sins. The apostate nature works iniquity wherever it is found. Thus originate the personal sins which fill the world. Such is the ground upon which the apostasy of man's nature from holiness, and its embrace of depravity, is called sin, and, as such, charged upon the race of man. The propriety of so charging it would seem to be unquestionable. It is certain, that nothing may be predicated of the person which does not grow out of the nature. And, if this must be admitted, there appears to be no ground on which it can be claimed that the nature, because existing in another person, is entitled to exemption from its essential guilt. The opposite view assumes the absurdity, that there may be, and is, that in the person which has a subsistence and moral agency of its own; a competence to responsibility, and capacity to appreciate and experience the power of the law's sanctions, distinct from, and independent of, the nature. Is it said to be unjust to hold my person bound for an act which was committed in the person of another? The objection would be valid, were the person a force to control or modify the nature. But, since the contrary is the case, it does not appear reasonable that exemption should be claimed on that ground. In fact, the nature, which was the cause of my person, was there. And, as every power or principle of efficiency which is in the effect must have been in its cause, it follows, inevitably, that every thing in me, upon which resistance to the apostasy might be imagined, was actually there, and, so far from opposing, took part in the treason. We "sinned in Adam and fell with him in his first transgression." The accident of my personal existence, had it then been realized, would have added no new influences to those which were actually engaged, and would not have modified the result, nor changed the responsibility attaching to it. The objection here considered, strikes at the root of all responsibility, as well for personal as for native sin. If I am





not justly responsible for Adam's transgression, because only my nature was efficient in it, then may I, with equal propriety, claim exemption in respect to personal sins, since in them my person is the mere subject of the action, and my nature is the sole efficient cause. It is not, however, our purpose in this place to discuss the doctrine of original sin, but merely to show the general principles, which embrace our relation to Adam's apostasy, under the category of sin.

To the still further clearing of the Scripture doctrine of sin, two other points are to be noticed. The first is, that the law, as we have formerly seen, is as old as that nature of man, which we have seen to be bound under a responsibility as old as the race. The law was written on that nature, when created in holiness, in the person of Adam. So that God's justice, in charging native depravity as sin, does not hold that to be sin which entered before the law. This point Paul insists upon, in the epistle to the Romans. Having in the second chapter described the Gentile world, as amenable to the law written on their hearts; he, in the fifth, justifies the accusation of sin, which he makes against the race, in Adam, upon the ground of the existence of that law, antedating that of Moses. Rom. v. 13, 14:—"For until the law (of Moses) sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned." The second point to be noticed is, that although sin has, in some measure, obscured the lines in which the law is inscribed on the heart, yet is the law always present, and acting with an energy, and appeal to the consciousness, precisely proportioned to the exigency of the case. In the first dawn of infant existence, it is present; and, as sin is there, only in the form of latent corruption, so is the law, in the form of an immanent power of conscience, God's witness within, ready to forbid and condemn sin. So, as the growing capacities gradually develop an active corruption,—a living hostility to holiness and the Holy One,—does the law within *pari passu* unfold a still more and more active testimony on their behalf; and, probably, nothing contributes, so constantly and so powerfully, to develop corruption in the yet unconscious infant heart, as the pre-

sence of this indwelling law, thus continually testifying on behalf of that to which the nature is averse; and from which, in its apostasy, the whole being instinctively revolts. Without the presence of the law, sin is dead. But the coming of the commandment continually revives it; and, by occasion of that commandment, it deceives and slays the soul.

The results to which we come, in the present inquiry, may be summed in the following propositions. 1. As to its formal aspect, sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God. It is *dwopla*, unlawfulness. 2. As to its essential nature, it is moral unlikeness to God;—or, rather, the reverse of his likeness. 3. Its origin is, in every instance, traceable to the criminal apostasy of a nature, made in God's image, and clothed with freedom to continue in that likeness, or depart from it. 4. As to its habitual form, it is a depraved principle, in the nature; hostile to all good, and prone to all evil; enmity to God and his law; and delighting in whatever is hateful to him. 5. In action, it is transgression, actively assailing, alike, the authority of God, and the rights of fellow-creatures.

The following pages will exhibit some of the aspects which, in the history of man, sin has assumed. In them, we shall see abundant confirmation of the positions here taken.

The evil of sin is infinite. It is, in and of itself, thus evil, as being the contradictory of the infinite excellence which is essential in God. This essential evil is aggravated by the relation which sin sustains, as transgression of the law. Thus, it robs God, by a perversion of the creature which he made, from the office to which he assigned it; to wit, the exhibition, in the Creator's presence, of an image of his own essential holiness; and the reflection of that image upon the other creatures. It is atrocious ingratitude; as it tramples upon the honour which the Creator has conferred, in the destination of the creature to such an office, and despises the happiness which he has bestowed; both of which are the highest to which creature could aspire, or of which finite being could conceive. It is a disparagement of the beauty and glory of the divine character; the likeness of



which is by it rejected, and the opposite embraced. In one word, sin is atheism. It denies God's infinite excellence, by refusing conformity to it, and embracing that infinite evil which he hates; disowns his sovereignty, by apostasy from the attitude and office which he has assigned; and repudiates his proprietary right in the creation, by an appropriation of self and the creatures in a way contrary to his will and injurious to his honour. It assails his Godhead, and his very being, by assuming an attitude as though he were not rightful Lord, nor the creation his rightful dominion; by refusing him that love and worship which as God is his due, and withholding that service and obedience which as Creator is his right; by seizing upon such part of the creation as comes within reach, and appropriating it, to the exclusion of Him who made it, and in whom it exists; and by attempting to sustain an independent existence, and expecting happiness despite his frown. Such is the essential nature of sin, as it subsists in the nature of the soul, and in the attitude of the powers; and such is it seen by the intelligent creatures; as, seated at the fountain of activity, in the springs of the being, it stamps its atrocious impress upon the actions which flow from the causative energies of the moral nature. Thus, to witnessing intelligences, and to man's own conscience, is detected and condemned the apostasy within, which has been already seen and abhorred by the Searcher of hearts, and condemned by the infallible doom of his holy law with an infinite curse;—condemned and accursed, while yet hidden in the recesses of the nature, undeveloped in actings of sin, and undiscovered by blind creature vision.

When the preceding paragraph was written, we supposed that no one, professing to look to a divine Redeemer, or to adore a  
 § 8. *Barnes'* God of infinite holiness, would question the infinite  
 doctrine. evil of sin. But, in a recent publication, devoted to a discussion of the doctrine of the atonement, the author says, "We cannot argue that because sin is an infinite evil, therefore an infinite atonement was necessary, or that it was necessary that he who should make the atonement should be infinite

in his nature." He then asks, in a marginal note, "In what sense is it true that sin is *infinite*? How is it ascertained that it is infinite? In what part of the Scriptures is it asserted or intimated that the necessity of an atonement rests on the fact that sin is an infinite evil? Where is it affirmed that sin has in any sense a character of infinity?"\* It would have been as reasonable and as conclusive, had Mr. B. asked, where it is affirmed that God is infinitely holy. Sin not an infinite evil! It is not, then, an infinitely evil thing, for a creature of God to act in contempt of the expostulation of his infinitely good and holy Maker, entreating him, "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate!"—Jer. xlv. 4. Then are not God's perfections of boundless excellence, nor the contempt and rejection of them an act infinitely atrocious and vile. God's love is not an infinitely precious thing, its loss a measureless evil, nor his hatred and wrath an infinite calamity. That is not an infinite evil, which forfeits eternal life; nor that which at the infallible tribunal of God's justice will "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"—2 Thess. i. 9;—for which God has treasured up "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish;"—for which "the smoke of torment will ascend up for ever and ever." Sin not an infinite evil! Then may Mr. Barnes provide a sounding-line which will fathom the bottomless pit,—a flood which will quench the unquenchable fire,—a weapon to slay the undying worm. Then are the pains of hell not intolerable; and the woe of perdition not infinitely fearful! Oh! is it possible that any child of clay can look upon the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and question the infinite evil of sin? Mr. Barnes' system is, indeed, proof against this appeal. His doctrine is, that every thing essential in Christ's atoning sacrifice, was the humiliation and corporeal suffering involved in a violent death. After showing, variously, that it is supposed by many, and was so by the Hebrews, that the life is in the blood, he says, "The plain doctrine of the New Testament, therefore is, that the blood of Christ—

\* Barnes on the Atonement, p. 161.





that is, that the giving of his life—was the means of making the atonement, or securing reconciliation between man and his Maker. In other words, his life was regarded as a sacrifice in the place of sinners, by means of which the penalty of the law, which man had incurred, might be averted from him. The voluntary death of the Redeemer, in the place of man, had such an efficacy, that man, on account of that, might be saved from the punishment which he had deserved, and treated *as if* he had not sinned. This is the doctrine of the atonement.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Even such merits as were thus acquired by the Mediator, are adequate, in Mr. Barnes' estimation, to the salvation of all the redeemed, besides admitting a large allowance for "waste;" since he supposes that many will perish for whom Christ died. That such a waste should take place, he thinks the analogies of nature would lead us to expect!†

\* Barnes on the Atonement, p. 302.

† Ibid. p. 327.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### DEATH THE PENALTY OF THE LAW.

THE laws designed for the government of the lower creation, being enstamped on the very substance of the material elements, and incorporated in the organic structure of the creatures, possessed a self-enforcing efficiency,—the communicated power of the Creator himself; so that they needed no other sanction to maintain their authority. But man was endowed with an intellect to apprehend the nature of the relation between him and his Creator, and to perceive the propriety and justice of the authority which God asserted over him; and a liberty of will, qualifying him for rendering a spontaneous and reasonable service, infinitely more honourable to man, and more suited to glorify God, than the necessary subordination of the lower creation. A law which addresses itself to such intelligence and freedom, requires sanctions which may appeal to the same attributes. Those which God affixed to his law, as revealed to Adam, were two:—eternal life, the reward of obedience; and death, the punishment of transgression. The promise of eternal life, which accompanied the law to Adam, constituted the principal element in a gracious covenant, of which we shall speak hereafter. Our present business is with the penalty.

We have already seen, that the design of the law is the revelation of the nature of God; and its authority founded in the proprietary relation subsisting between him and his creatures; and that the practical form which the precept assumes, depends on the nature and condition of the creature, as angelic or human, innocent, fallen, reprobate, or redeemed. Analogous to this is the constitution of the penalty. A creature is admitted to communion with God, and dignified by the reception of a law ad-



dressed to his understanding, and committed to the charge of his unbiassed will;—a law, in which he learns the great and ennobling end of his being; the accomplishment of which is thus intrusted to his own free co-operation with God. If such a trust be betrayed by disobedience, the transgressor must, thereby, of necessity, come under his Creator's frown, and experience his curse. His crime has in it, not only the elements of all moral evil, as it alienates his Creator's property, repudiates the likeness of his glorious holiness, and contemns his condescension and favour; but it is also an assault upon the sovereignty of the Lawgiver, as set forth in the law. Hence, not only may the transgressor expect to be left to the evils which naturally grow out of the sin which he has embraced; but, to realize the power of his offended Sovereign, arrayed against him, in the infliction of a punishment adequate to his crime. Further, the form in which the evil thus incurred shall be inflicted, must be determined, in many respects, by the nature of the victim. It will assume one aspect in the case of fallen angels; another, in many of its features, in fallen men; and still another when the Prince of Life becomes the sufferer.

The infliction thus imposed upon the transgressor constitutes the penalty of the law. By this phrase, is designated that evil, which is defined in the statute, and inflicted by the officers of the law, for the vindication of its sovereignty against transgressors. Three things are, therefore, involved in the word, penalty, and exhaustive of its meaning. Its design is, to vindicate the sovereignty;—its matter, is defined in the law;—and its infliction on the transgressor, is made by the officers of the law, in accordance with its mandate.

An entirely different view, on this subject, is taken by the New Haven school of divines. Says Mr. Barnes, "The penalty of the law is what is threatened or inflicted by the lawgiver, as an expression of his sense of the value of the law, and of the evil of violating it. The penalty may be measured or determined (a) by an actual statement, on his part, of what he will inflict, or, what the violation of the law deserves; or (b) by what actually comes upon the offender, under his administration, as

the consequence of violating the law. In other words, we may learn what is the penalty of the law, from revelation, or from observation of the actual course of events, or from both combined. The actual threatening may or may not cover the whole ground; and what the penalty *is*, may be learned partly from the statement, and partly from observation. As a matter of fact, we ascertain, in a great measure, what the penalty of violating the divine law is, from observation. Thus, we learn what is the penalty of intemperance, partly from the previous statement of what *will* be the consequences, and partly from an actual observation of the evils which come upon the drunkard. To know what the real penalty is, we must look at all those consequences on the body and the soul; on the property and the peace of the drunkard, on his family and his reputation; on the effects in delirium tremens; in his wretched death, in his dishonoured memory, and in the woes endured forever. All these, and not a part of them, are designed to express the Lawgiver's sense of the value of the law, and the evil of its violation. To endure, therefore, the penalty of the law in the case of intemperance is to bear *all* the evils which it actually brings on the offender in this world and in the world to come. If a substitute, therefore, should endure the literal penalty of the law, all must be endured which would actually come upon the offender himself."\*

This whole view is both superficial and unsound; involving erroneous conceptions in respect to the nature of the evil of sin, as well as concerning the office of the penalty. It is in perfect keeping with that whole system, according to which, sin consists in the outward violation of statute law. Were this true, there would be no room to allow any evils resulting from sin, except such as the law inflicts. It would seem as though a moment's reflection upon the case cited by our author, must have led to a discovery of the fallacy of the whole theory. Why is drunkenness a crime, condemned and punished by the law of God? The only reason that can be given is, that the natural effects result-

\* Barnes on the Atonement, p. 233.



ing from intemperance are such as are incompatible with the duties which the inebriate owes, to himself, his family and God. It is because the free use of alcohol is injurious to the body and mind, and involves many evils, as its natural consequences, that God has forbidden it, and sealed the prohibition with a penal curse. The argument of Mr. Barnes confounds this penalty, which God inflicts, with those evils which are caused immediately by the habit itself, and to protect men from which, was the very design of the law and its penalty. As we have already seen, there are two evils in sin, which are not to be confounded together. First, it is contrary to the perfect nature of God. And, as God's perfection is the cause of his own blessedness; and his likeness is an immediate honour and cause of happiness, to those who imitate his excellence,—so is sin, in and of itself, an evil and dishonour, and the cause of multiplied evils, in him who indulges it. Thus, love is the immediate cause of happiness, to its possessor, and to those with whom he is brought in contact; whilst hatred and malevolence, of themselves, banish joy from the bosom where they dwell, and mar the enjoyments of all around. Not only so, but God, as Creator, has vindicated his own excellency, by so ordering it, in his creation, that the imitation of his perfections is, in many ways, the immediate cause of increasing good and happiness to the creatures; whilst indulgence in sin induces effects of an opposite character.

The second evil of sin has respect to the sovereignty of God. Because of its essential evil, its incongruity to his own most holy nature, God has seen good, as sovereign, to prohibit sin. And, having vindicated his essential excellence, by the natural relations, which, as we have just seen, he has established between holiness and happiness, sin and misery, he asserts and vindicates his sovereignty, by annexing the penalty of the law, which his sovereign hand judicially enforces against those who transgress the precept; as well as the rewards, which we shall hereafter see to have been pledged to obedience.

Thus, have the holiness and the sovereignty of God, each, their own appropriate relation to sin, and vindication, against the sinner and in behalf of the holy. And, as a broad line of

demarcation is traceable, between the essential evil of sin,—which is moral unlikeness to God,—and its formal aspect,—which is, violation of the law,—so, there is a line, equally broad, between those provisions, which are developed through the operation of the natural laws of cause and effect, under the ordering of the God of providence, and those judicial provisions, which arise out of the law, and are dispensed by the immediate hand of the eternal King. The former class attests the infinite excellence of God, the holy; the other proclaims the righteous and eternal sovereignty of the Lawgiver and Judge. The one arises out of the very nature of holiness, as good, and, of sin, as evil; and can have no other immediate cause. The other proceeds from the immediate hand of God, in the assertion of his authority and exercise of his power. As relating to sin, the one is the evil proper to sin in itself, and consequent upon it as a natural cause; the other is the penalty, defined in the law and inflicted by God. These distinctions, thus so broadly marked and important, are, by Mr. Barnes, entirely overlooked and ignored, in the vain attempt to escape from the scriptural doctrine respecting the penalty of the law, as inflicted on the Son of God, our vicarious Surety at the bar of divine justice.

The phrase, "penalty of sin," is sometimes used in a general sense, to express all the evils, of whatever kind, which follow sin, whether consequential or punitive,—whether vindictory of the holiness, or of the sovereignty, of God. But the phrase, "penalty of the law," is never properly used to designate any evil which the law does not prescribe, which the judge does not find written in the statute-book, and which the officers of the law do not inflict by virtue of its mandate;—any thing, in short, which is not expressly designed and effectual to vindicate the authority of the law, as law; and of God, as sovereign and lawgiver. That authority can be vindicated against the disobedient, in but one conceivable way;—that is, by the infliction of an evil, proportioned to the transgression; and which, being prescribed in the law, is thus unequivocally attested to flow from its curse. The unimpaired sovereignty of the law is thus signified; inasmuch as he, by whose disobedience it has been dis-





honoured, is the involuntary evidence of its supremacy; by virtue of the exercise upon him, subjugated though hostile, of its absolute power; and his experience of the terrors and fearfulness of that intolerable and inevitable curse, the forewarnings of which he has contemned.

Death, was the name used to designate the penalty, at the first giving of the law to our first parents. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. § 3. Death not a metaphor. 17. Such was the language in which it was stated to them in the garden. The same word is habitually used in the Scriptures as expressive of the judicial infliction incurred by sin. The proper and primary meaning of the word, as addressed to Adam, and descriptive of the penalty of the law, was,—not specifically bodily decease, spiritual ruin, nor the torments of hell, but—in one word—the wrath and curse of God. This is the definition, implied in all the statements of the Westminster standards. They always distinguish between the curse itself, and the sorrows, temporal and eternal, which flow from it; and carefully mark their consequential relation to each other. Thus, in the Confession of Faith, ch. vi. § 6:—"Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal." Shorter Catechism, Qu. 84:—"Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come." Qu. 19:—"All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." See also Larger Catechism, questions 27–29, 152, &c.

That the word, death, is not used in the law as a metaphor, but as signifying, in a literal sense, the curse of God, is, we think, demonstrable. The metaphor is a figure of speech, in which the thing named only bears a relation of analogy, real or fancied, to that which is meant. Thus, when we speak of a man of towering or giant intellect, although we appeal to stand-

ards of physical dimensions, the design is, to characterize qualities which are unmeasurable by any such rule; the sense of the expression being traceable only through a distant analogy. The use of this figure implies greater familiarity and clearness of apprehension, in regard to the class of things whence the figures are selected, than to that to which they are applied for illustration. It employs things well known, to illustrate such as are less known. In this view, it is remarkable, to our present purpose, that in metaphors the type is always taken from the natural world,—from material things and their properties, to illustrate truths of the moral world.

The use of this figure, therefore, implies a darkened state of the understanding and the soul; a state in which a veil is interposed, so that man is not able to apprehend immediately, and correspond directly with, the spiritual world; but only mediately, through the help of visible comparisons, and material analogies. This state of the understanding is not predicable of our first parents, when the law was given to them in innocence at their creation; but has resulted from their subsequent apostasy and fall. Of it Paul says, that, by consequence of sin, men "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."—Rom. i. 21. They "walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."—Eph. iv. 17, 18. So, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Whilst, thus, the spiritual nature, including the intellectual powers, has been obscured and darkened, sense has assumed the pre-eminence. Hence, the introduction of the metaphor into human speech,—a badge of the fall, at the same time that it constitutes a help to our darkness, and a means of communication with the world of light whence we are exiled. That such a figure was not employed, in communicating the law to Adam, will appear from several considerations.

1. We have already seen that the law was originally inscribed



on the heart of Adam in his creation. That the penalty was there included, is evident not only from the fact of its being an essential element in the law, but from its continuance to the present hour, deeply engraven on every human heart in inseparable connection with that law. In this case there is no room for the interposition of figurative language; as, in fact, the instrumentality of speech was not employed at all; but the creative finger inscribed the whole upon the tablet of man's soul. The tree of knowledge was a sacramental seal of the covenant of works; of which we shall hereafter speak. It constituted a public and unambiguous test of man's obedience to the requirements of the law already given. The decree, therefore, which was made to him, in regard to it, was merely a repetition of obligations and a sanction, which were already known to Adam; for the purpose of defining their relation to the particular command in regard to that tree. When, therefore, the Creator saw fit to collect and concentrate the whole authority of his law, and all the terrors of its penal sanction, in the one precept,—“Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;”—it is unreasonable to imagine him to have expressed the wrathful curse, which Adam by nature knew to attach to transgression, by a word, the proper meaning of which was related to the sense intended, only by obscure and distant analogies. If ever, then was the time, when direct, didactic and unambiguous language was needed,—language which should strike directly home to the cords of consciousness in Adam's already instructed heart.

Adam needed no metaphor, to explain to him the meaning of the wrath of God. He knew it as the opposite of the communion and happiness which he enjoyed. The figure, too, which is thought to be used, even if he had been at all able to understand it, would in its own nature have been exceedingly vague and misleading. Instead of its suggesting spontaneously, from the analogies of physical death, the meaning of the threatening, it is difficult, even with the light thrown upon the subject by the sad experience of our race, to persuade ourselves that any ana-

logy at all exists; and without such experience, and the light of the Scriptures revealing the eternal sufferings of the wicked, analogy from bodily death would rather have induced the idea of annihilation as the penalty of sin.

2. But another fatal objection to the idea that the language is figurative, occurs in the fact, that of natural death, from which the figure is supposed to be taken, Adam had as yet no knowledge. It was creation's dawn; a scene of innocent and happy existence. No wrathful cloud had frowned, or thunder burst in the sky. No shriek of anguish had rent the air. No dying groan had yet been breathed, nor lifeless corpse defiled the virgin soil of creation. Upon the supposition, therefore, that the word, death, is figuratively used, we are brought to the absurd conclusion, that God, in addressing the pure and as yet untarnished intellect of Adam, had recourse to a phenomenon, of which he had no experience, and which was therefore to him as yet without a name, to illustrate one of the simplest conceptions which could be brought before his mind,—the reverse of God's favour, which he so richly enjoyed,—the descent of his curse.

3. The natural and beautiful solution which our interpretation gives, to the various and apparently incompatible uses of the word, death, confirms its correctness. The law to which it is annexed is transgressed by our first parents. The transgression brings in the penalty; and the sentence is passed by God, in the form of a curse upon the woman, in her relation to the husband whom she had ensnared, and the children whom she had brought into ruin; in a curse upon the earth for man's sake, and upon him, in the toil of his hands and the sorrow of his heart, until he return to the ground out of which he was taken; and upon both, in separation from the tree of life, and exclusion from the garden, and the presence of God. How must the sorrowing and penitent pair have marked, in the gradual development of their own history, the unfolding of the dreadful comprehensiveness of that word which had forewarned them of the frown of their Maker against sin, until at length affliction came upon them in a form





of horror in which bodily dissolution became to their minds the type and pledge of God's consummated curse.

A glance at a part of their earlier history will shed light upon this subject. After their expulsion from the garden, however

§ 4. *Abel's* the loving hand of a compassionate and covenant death.

God may have smoothed their path, yet was it doubtless one of continual trouble. Toil and sorrow were the elements of the curse. And against them it was uttered; upon them enforced. When, at eventide, toil-worn and hungry, they returned from the labours of the day, or tossed their weary and aching limbs by night upon an unquiet couch, and remembered the innocence and happiness of "Eden, blissful seat," and the transgression and curse which robbed them of it all;—when at times sickness came, and Eve bathed the temples of her husband, burning with fever, and throbbing with pain;—when, in seasons of spiritual desertion and darkness, the flaming sword which guarded Eden, seemed to them to shine with an angry gleam, their supplications failed of a gracious recognition, and they came, unblest, in darkness and sorrow, from the presence of Him with whom they were once privileged to hold free and unrestrained intercourse, as with a beloved and intimate friend; they recognised all as bitter streams flowing from that fountain, death, which the law had denounced against transgression. Yet were these but light and transient sorrows, compared with the poignant grief which in process of time they were called to realize.

Nearly a hundred and thirty years had hurried by since earth first smiled in verdure, in the light of the new-born sun. Perhaps it was a Sabbath's eve. That had been a day to be remembered by our first parents. According to their custom, they had gathered their family around the altar of God, each bringing his offering to be presented there. Cain, their stern first-born, brought of the fruits of the earth, a thank-offering to the God of Providence; but with no penitent recognition of the sin-atoning Lamb. To his offering God had no respect. But the distressful feelings thus induced in Adam and Eve were soon forgotten in the tender emotions with which they beheld the fire of God consume the lamb which Abel's faith presented. They

saw not the scowl which settled on the brow of their eldest son, as he contrasted his own rejected offering with the accepted pledge of his brother's piety. And now, as the shades of evening gather, Adam and Eve sit musing in their tranquil home on the transactions of the day. Perhaps they recur to the sad mistake of Eve, who, upon the birth of her first-born, thought that already the Seed of promise had come; and, exclaimed, *קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת-יְהוָה*, "I have obtained the man Jehovah."—Gen. iv. 1. But, as the stillness of night comes on, why is not Abel at home? At eventide he went forth to meditate in the field. But the wonted time of his return is past, and yet he comes not. Every rustling leaf stirs the affectionate heart of Eve, as she listens for the footstep of her gentle and pious son. Cain too is absent; but such is often his mood, to wander away, withdrawn from the communion of the pious house. At length a footfall is heard. It is the hurried step of Cain. With anxious look, Eve asks, "Cain, where is thy brother?" Cain answers evasively, and hastens to seek repose in sleep. But no sleep that night closed the murderer's eyes. No slumber stilled the throbbings of his conscience-smitten heart. At midnight he hears a voice; but not the gentle tones of his mother. The stern demand is made,—"Cain, where is thy brother?" Cain knows the voice of God. But whilst his hair stands up, his remorseless spirit replies, in terms of insolent defiance, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" Then hears he the dread assurance,—"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground; and now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand." At length the desired morning dawns. Adam and Eve forsake their couch. Forebodings of coming sorrow have banished sleep. They go forth to seek their son; and soon, too soon, they find the bloody corpse! Conceive the feelings of the mother, as she beholds, in this form of horror, the first victim of the curse of her sin,—the first trophy of death! With all a mother's undespairing love, she tries every means to resuscitate the lifeless clay; until even she can hope no more. Then breaks forth all the agony of a mother's grief, as she throws herself upon the loved, the cold and



mangled form. "O Abel! my child! my child! It was I that plucked the forbidden fruit! It was I that purchased the curse! Would to God I that day had perished! That thus thou shouldst be the victim! My innocent son! Abel! Abel! my son! O God of justice! This, this is the death indeed! This is thy uttermost curse!"

Thus readily does the death of the body receive the name of the curse whence it flows, and of which it is the element most signally impressive to the senses,—which on the one hand consummates and swallows up in itself all earthly sorrows; and on the other, launches the unredeemed spirit on the unutterable sorrows of the second death. As the phenomena of bodily death continually force themselves upon our attention, whilst our carnal apprehensions fail to heed the multiplied indications of a universal curse resting upon us, this, the figurative and secondary sense of the word, has usurped the primary place; and as men have "not liked to retain God in their knowledge," especially in respect to his attributes of holiness and retributive justice, they have gradually lost sight of the radical idea, which originally attached to the word, even in this its secondary use; until at length it has come to be understood as the name of a mere phenomenon of nature.

That bodily dissolution was not the immediate idea expressed by the word, death, in the penalty of the law, is still further evident from several considerations.

§ 5. Not  
physical  
death.

1. If that was the meaning, it behooved that our sinning parents had actually returned to dust on the day of the transgression. The law was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Here is the penalty named, that is, death; the time emphatically specified, "the day that thou eatest thereof;" and the certainty of the infliction marked by the form of the expression, which is indicated in our translation by the phrase, "thou shalt surely die," corresponding with the still greater force of the original, in which it is an insensitive repetition:—"dying thou shalt die." Here is something which the God of truth declares he will inflict on the day of transgression. But it was not death of the body; for that did

not occur. It is in vain to say that the transgressors then became legally dead; or, that death then began. These expressions need only to be stripped of their figurative forms, to appear incapable of vindication. To say that a man is legally dead, is, in other words, to say that sentence of death is by the law passed upon him. True:—But the law also specifies the time:—"In the day that thou eatest." If legal death satisfies this provision of the law, it must also meet that which defines the penalty; for it is that penalty which is to be inflicted on the day of transgression. And if this be admitted, it follows, that the law, satisfied with this "legal death," can never demand any other! In other words, upon this view, the requirement of the law may be met by the solemn passing of a sentence, which shall never be inflicted,—by a farce to satisfy the demands of decency! So, again, the phrase, "death then began," means, that it then became certain, that death would ultimately take place; or, at most, that the seeds of disease then entered the body. But prospective death is not death. The seeds of sickness, or even disease realized, is not death, or dissolution of the body. And if that be what is meant by the sentence of the law, these will not satisfy the requirements of the case. In short, bodily death did not occur, because that was not the threatening couched in the word. But the curse which it designed to express did fall at once; and it is not unworthy of observation, that in the sentence, as passed after the fall, the word, death, is not employed to signify that "return to dust," which was enumerated among the miseries which resulted from the penalty of the law, then inflicted by the justice of God.

2. Christ was made under the law, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15. He "hath abolished death,"—2 Tim. i. 10; and assures the bereaved Martha, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 25, 26. Yet of all who then heard and believed, and of all the after generations who have trusted in





these exceeding great and precious promises, not one has avoided return to the dust. Evidently, Christ did not speak of bodily dissolution, but of something different, constituting the penalty of the law for sin, which he satisfied. Equally conclusive is his language in John v. 24:—"He that heareth my word; and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." "From death unto life,"—from under the wrath of God to the enjoyment of his smile.

As if to mark with emphasis the fact that the word, death, properly expresses wrath, the Scriptures repudiate its use, in the case of the people of God. "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth," said Jesus of the ruler's daughter, —Matt. ix. 24; and again, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep."—John xi. 11. So, Stephen "fell asleep;" and, not to multiply citations, observe the contrast between the accursed death which Christ endured for sin, and the blessed departure of his people, as marked in this language of Paul:—"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. And again, "God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."—1 Thess. v. 9, 10.

A careful inspection of the Scriptures will show that the word, death, is there familiarly used in the sense which we attribute to it, as the primary and proper one. Thus, in reference to the plague of locusts, Pharaoh says to Moses, "Forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that he may take away from me this death only."—Ex. x. 17. The prophet Elisha, in removing the curse which had been affixed to Jericho,—in regard to which see Joshua vi. 17, 18, 26, and 1 Kings xvi. 34,—cast salt into the spring, saying, "Thus saith the Lord: I have healed these waters; there shall not be thence any more death or barren land."—2 Kings ii. 21. Says Hosea, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died. And now they sin more

and more."—Hos. xiii. 1, 2. To the same effect is the language of Paul:—"To be carnally minded is death; . . . for the carnal mind is enmity against God. . . . So, then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. viii. 6-8.

But it is doing injustice to the evidence, to attempt a selection of particular passages. They cannot convey the force of the argument which exists in the whole style of the Scriptures, as regards this word, and the interchange of it with others, about the meaning of which there can be no question. The law announces death as the punishment of sin. The Judge, after sin has entered, appeals to the law, (Gen. iii. 11,) and passes sentence according to its demands. That sentence is a curse; and in it, bodily dissolution has no more emphatic mention than the toils of labour. When afterwards God proclaimed the law to Israel,—the same law which had been given to Adam at first,\*—its sanction is, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them."—Deut. xxvii. 26. With this compare the preceding verses, and ch. xi. 26-29. To this language the apostle Paul appeals, in unfolding the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of that Seed, who was promised to the woman, as the destroyer of "him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." "For," says he, "as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. . . . Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Gal. iii. 10, 13. To the same purpose is the statement of the apostle, that "the law worketh wrath,"—Rom. iv. 15; and that "the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience,"—Eph. v. 6; and the designation by which transgressors of the law are called, "children of wrath."—Eph. ii. 3.

In short, it can hardly be questioned by any one, that the

\* "The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.

"The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments,"—*Shorter Catechism*, Questions 40, 41.





word, death, as originally used, was designed to express the true and proper penal sanction of the law. No one can do otherwise than admit that sanction to consist essentially in the wrath and curse of God. And it would seem, further, impossible to doubt, for reasons already given, that bodily dissolution is improperly expressed by the use of the word, except where that phenomenon constitutes an element in God's dealings with his enemies.

There are four instances, given in the Scriptures, from which we may learn the precise intent of the word in question:—Believers, of whom, although their bodies return to dust, we are assured that they “never taste of death;”—John viii. 52;—devils, who cannot realize bodily dissolution, yet experience all the horrors of the penal death; (Rev. xx. 10, 14);—Christ, who tasted death for every man, in body and soul, although his sufferings were comprehended within the days of his flesh; and in whom was no sin;—and wicked men, in whom death reigns forever, in impurity and woe. From these cases it is apparent that bodily dissolution, remorse, and eternity of torment, are but accidental incidents to the infliction of the real death.

Perhaps it may be thought that we have dwelt needlessly on this point. If we are not mistaken in its importance, what has been said will have been well urged, if it brings the mind of the reader clearly and fully to the conviction that the word, death,—the penalty of the law,—expressed, and was intended to express, the single idea of the inflicted curse of God. It did not, nor was it designed to, descend into any enumeration of the particulars of the misery which must be realized, in soul and body, in possessions and pursuits, in time and eternity, by a creature, upon whom rests the wrath of his omnipresent, eternal and infinite Creator. As we have already seen the law to have been endowed with a flexibility of adaptation to all circumstances of all created intelligences, so is the penalty. The one curse of Jehovah—death—involves men and devils in calamities, in some respects similar, but in many altogether unlike; dependent on their diversity of nature and circumstances. So, too, whilst the Son of God, when he bore the curse, did not realize some of the features of the wrath which wicked men and devils experience;

on the other hand, there were elements of bitterness in his cup, of which no other being can ever taste.

Such, then, was the penal sanction which admonished Adam, as in original rectitude he was invested with the domain of earth, and the sovereignty of the creatures, under allegiance to God. He is ruled by a law, which, in its exceeding simplicity is reducible to the one word, love; and, in its amazing compass, adapts itself to all cases, and all time. His obedience is enforced by the threatening of a penalty, which, simple as the law itself, in the single word, death, sums its whole significance. But in that word,—announcing the wrath of Him in whom he lived, and moved, and had his being, and in whose benignant smile he found all his happiness,—he was forewarned of a ruin, infinite as the nature of God, comprehensive as the being of the victim, and enduring as that eternity, with the endowment of which his Maker had sealed his own likeness in the soul of man.



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE LAW A COVENANT OF LIFE.

"*Fœdus Dei cum suis, geminum numeratur in Scripturis; alterum, naturæ, cum homine adhucdum integro; alterum, gratiæ, cum corrupto. Prius illud, cujus hic agimus negotium, designari a theologis consuevit, jam fœdus legale, quod perfectam obedientiam legi, tam decalogicæ, cordi ejus inscriptæ; quam peculiari isti de non manducando fructu vetito, præstandam, pro conditione habuerit consequendi vitam æternam: jam 2. fœdus operum, quod pro imperio præscribat, absolutissimum legis obsequium, sub symbolo non manducandi fructum arboris vetitæ: jam 3. fœdus naturæ, quod non tantum legi isti exigat obedientiam, quæ maxima sui parte, hominis naturæ erat insculpta; sed etiam, quod cum universa natura humana, ex ordine generationis, etiam adhucdum futura, coierit.*"—VAN MASTRICHT THEOLOGIA, Lib. 8, cap. xii. 8.

Science has amused itself with the construction of a curious box, in which, by the skilful arrangement of small mirrors, and bits of various-coloured glass, beautiful figures, arrayed in rainbow hues, present themselves to the eye, in ever varying forms. In it you admire some striking combination; but, as you gaze, the instrument is moved by some slight touch. Quick as thought, the image is gone, and new forms have taken its place. For days may you watch the fantastic shapes which in succession appear and then vanish forever away; and yet, among them all, never again will you recognise that which first excited your admiration. It is gone. No eye but yours ever rested upon it; no other will ever catch the reflection of its form.

So might God have made this beautiful-world a kaleidoscope for the admiration and instruction of angelic hosts,—in which they should have seen ever new and varying creations springing into existence, and passing away, to display the power, and wisdom, and wonderful resources of the Creator. Of all these

exhibitions of grandeur, beauty and excellence, man, the loftiest and the best, might have been called in his turn, by omnipotence, from nothing; and permitted for a few brief days to delight himself in the fresh and gladdening scenes of the new-born earth; to admire and adore the goodness and wisdom which everywhere shone; himself cast a brighter beam of divine glory over the whole; and then unconsciously vanish, to give place to some being endowed with still higher gifts, and more eminently qualified to admire and adore, as well as display and illustrate, the perfections of the Creator. Had such been the case, no right of the creature had been violated, and no attribute of the Creator tarnished.

When Adam enjoyed those pleasurable sensations, which arose from the exercise of his bodily faculties, and the powers of his mind and soul,—as he went forth to receive the homage of the brute creation, and set upon them the seal of his sovereignty, in the names he imposed,—as he assumed possession of the domain with which the Creator's goodness had endowed him, which everywhere shone resplendent with its Author's glory,—as he inhaled the fragrance of the new-blown flowers, and admired the beauty of the virgin world, basking in the warm and genial beams of the morning sun; or caught new pleasure from the brightness of the twinkling train of the evening sky, and the grandeur of their crescent queen,—it became him to burst forth in high strains of adoration, due to the glorious One, the Maker of them all; whose breath gave him life, and inspired him with those exquisite emotions of happiness;—and this, too, as much, even though the sun, which first shone on his birth, had been destined ere its decline to witness his life and being withdrawn, and NOTHING, whence he came, receive him back to her bosom of silence. Whatever he had of life or endowment was the gift of a Power, who might at any time, in unquestioned sovereignty, reclaim what he had in goodness lent; and thus far we have no assurance that man, with all his capacities, and all his gifts, will not prove fleeting as the golden drapery of the evening sky, which flings a passing splendour on the scenery of nature, then dies in the shadows of night. Had such been





the history of man, or of successive intelligences, on this earth, any suggestion of complaint must have been forever silenced by the demand, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" and witnessing angels had, on each new display, attuned their harps to new themes, and cried, "Glorious are thy works, and just and holy thy ways, Lord God Almighty."

In such proceeding, God had indeed been glorified; but where, then, had been the bright hopes of immortality which he has deigned to confer on our race? How, then, had been unfolded the crowning glory of God, which is now displayed in the economy of grace to apostate man, ransomed from hell by the blood of the second Adam,—“God manifest in the flesh”? Ye angel choir, prepare new anthems of nobler praise; not to extol creating wisdom and power, but to celebrate redeeming love! Ye sons of Adam, lift up your voices, and magnify the grace which formed the plan, and gave the Son, a ransom for the sins of men!

Of that scheme, the covenant of life with Adam was the first element. In it, we view a feature of God's dealings with him, which presents the parties in an entirely new aspect,—their position toward each other altogether transformed. God here stoops from his throne, to enter into covenant bonds with man; and our first parents rise, from the attitude of mere creature dependence, heretofore contemplated, to the dignity of parties confederate with God; and acquire from him a covenant property in life and happiness, in the sustaining power and beneficence of their Maker. The covenant between God and man presents itself in two forms:—the one, native, and the other, positive. Here, it will first be viewed in the former aspect. The effect of the positive constitution of it will afterward be considered. As there are some who deny that any covenant transaction took place between God and Adam, we shall first inquire into the facts; and shall then be prepared to determine whether they come under the definition of a covenant.

The Mosaic narrative states that the Lord God planted a garden, eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. “And out of the ground made the Lord God

to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river <sup>promise and its seals.</sup> *§ 2. The* went out of Eden, to water the garden.” “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. ii. 10, 16, 17. Here are four things bearing directly on the matter before us:—The garden; the river; the tree of life, and privilege respecting it; and the tree of knowledge, and prohibition concerning it.

1. The garden was a type of heaven, as a world of security and perfect blessedness and beauty. That this is so, needs but little argument. It is described as planted by God himself, and enclosed so as to be accessible only at the gate; it was watered by a river flowing through it; contained in its midst the tree of life; man, created outside, was brought into it; and upon his sin, he was excluded from it, although it was not destroyed, but placed under cherubic guard. By the Hebrews it was always regarded as a type of heaven, which they hence called paradise, from the Greek (*παρδεισος*) *paradeisos*, a garden. This opinion was recognised and sanctioned by our Saviour, when he, the second Adam, on the cross, expiating the sin of the first, and reopening the way to a forfeited heaven, assures the thief, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”—Luke xxiii. 43. So Paul says of himself, “I knew a man . . . caught up to the third heaven, . . . into paradise.”—2 Cor. xii. 2, 4. Again, with still more emphatic reference to the garden of Eden, the Son of God writes, by John, to the church of Ephesus, “To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”—Rev. ii. 7. In the last chapter of the Revelation we have a vision of that paradise, no longer a solitary garden, the abode of a single pair, but grown into a city, whose maker and builder is God, and filled with the innumerable company of the redeemed. But still the tree of life flourishes in the streets, in eternal verdure and fruitfulness,



and the river flows through the midst in an exhaustless stream. Rev. *xxi.* and *xxii.* 1, 2, 3.

2. The river which watered the garden was a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the alone source of strength adequate to Adam's duties, and of spiritual growth and fruitfulness. Hence, it is, in the book of the Revelation, described as proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. (Rev. *xxii.* 1.) Compare this with the language of Christ:—"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me; as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive."—John vii. 37-39. See also John iv. 14.

3. The tree of life was a type of the fruits of holiness in active obedience, the righteousness requisite to eternal life. As it stood in the garden, it constituted a sacramental attestation and seal to Adam's obedience, and to the covenant of life conditioned upon it. The language used in connection with the exclusion of Adam from Eden implies the tree to have been a sacrament of life. "Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever, therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden."—Gen. iii. 22, 23. To the same conclusion tends the language of the Son of God:—"To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."—Rev. ii. 7. And again, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."—Rev. *xxii.* 14. The tree, as it stands in the new Jerusalem, is a type of the righteousness of Christ, which now takes the place of our own in our justification. Hence, it is said, that "its leaves are for the healing of the nations."—Rev. *xxii.* 2. The meaning of the description thus given will be immediately seen by reference to the remarkable discourse of our Saviour, recorded in John vi. He says, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink

his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."—John vi. 35, 47, 48, 53-55.

4. The tree of knowledge was a seal to the penal sanction of the law. As its name indicated, it constituted a test by means of which it should appear whether Adam chose good or evil. In regard to this tree, Adam is commanded, "Thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Although express mention is here made of the penal sanction only, yet it involves, by necessary implication, the alternative promise of life, in case of obedience. The transaction is a signal deviation from the course of economy appropriate to God's purely sovereign relation to a sinless being, viewed merely as a subject. To that, the moral law, enforced as it is by the same sanction which is here announced, was altogether adequate; and therefore, in honour of that perfection of the law, and of himself, its author, it would have been necessary that its precepts should be left the alone statutes of government, had God seen fit to sustain the relation of a sovereign merely. The superimposing, therefore, of a positive precept, in regard to a thing in itself indifferent, indicates the sovereign to occupy covenant relations to his subjects. It binds and limits the penalty to that particular precept; and, by virtue of the temporary character which attaches to a law of this nature, implies the speedy termination of probation; and,—upon the supposition of a favourable result,—the abrogation of the penal sanction altogether, the abolition of the curse, and the enjoyment by the creature of a favour of God and happiness proportioned to the fearfulness of the penalty which constituted the alternative.

5. To the matters thus enumerated must be added, the institution of the Sabbath, which constituted not only a day of necessary rest and devotion, but especially a type and seal of the heavenly rest. That such was its character, let us hear the evidence of Paul:—"For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of





the world. For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day, on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. . . . There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God."—Heb. iv. 3-5, 9. Thus, then, did the Sabbath constitute to Adam a sacramental pledge of heaven, viewed as the goal of his earthly course, and the end of his work of probation. And it is not unworthy of consideration, whether the occurrence of the Sabbath so soon after Adam's entrance on the stage of action, was not designed as an intimation, that the period of probation would be brief, and the reward of faithfulness early attained.

Such, then, were the principal elements of the providential dealing of God with Adam, as bearing upon the present point. Whilst, alike in the law written on his heart, and the precept addressed to his intellect, he reads the curse of his Maker denounced against transgression, on the other hand, he has in many forms the pledge of life sealed to him as the reward of obedience. It is engraven in indelible characters on his heart. It speaks in the garden enclosed; which in all its fruitfulness and beauty told of heaven as his ultimate home. He hears its voice in the murmur of the river, testifying of the Holy Spirit, his exhaustless source of strength and holiness. He has it in the tree of life, which, as he ate, sealed to him the reward of obedience. It stands revealed in the tree of knowledge, which, while uttering and sealing the curse, implied and illumined the promise. It shone in the tranquil light and holy rest of the Sabbath; foreshadowing and sealing to him the end of probation, in the rest of heaven. And we may add,—he enjoyed it in that communion with God, which was granted to him; which, by unveiling to him the face of Him that liveth and in whom he lived, and imparting the joy of his favour, implied the continuance of it to him in continued allegiance. That all these facts lead to the inevitable conclusion that a promise of life was given to Adam upon condition of obedience, it would seem almost impossible that any one should deny.

But here comes in a question which is of no little importance. Did the promise originate in connection with the positive precept

respecting the tree of knowledge? Or was it contemporaneous <sup>§ 3. Date of</sup> with and incorporated in the moral law, written on the promise. the heart of Adam at his creation? That the latter is the doctrine of the Westminster standards, will conclusively appear in the following paragraphs:—

"The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, beside a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.

"The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding every one to personal, perfect and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man; promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it."\*

"God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him, and all his posterity, to personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

"This law after his fall continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and as such was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments."†

"God in six days made all things of nothing, very good in their own kind: in special he made all the angels holy: and he made our first parents, Adam and Eve, the root of mankind, both upright, and able to keep the law written in their heart: Which law they were naturally bound to obey under pain of death; but God was not bound to reward their service, till he entered into a covenant or contract with them, and their posterity in them, to give them eternal life upon condition of perfect personal obedience, withal threatening death in case they should fail. This is the covenant of works."‡

\* Larger Catechism, Questions 92, 93.

† Westminster Confession, Chap. xix. §§ 1, 2.

‡ Westminster Assembly's Brief Sum of Christian Doctrine. Head i. § 2.





On these places, two or three points are to be observed. 1. In the quotation from the Larger Catechism, the law, under which our first parents were placed at their creation, is divided into two elements,—the “special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” and “the moral law.” The moral law, thus carefully distinguished from the positive precept, is then described in covenant terms, as “promising life upon the fulfilling of it.” 2. In the Brief Sum, the moral law is said to have been “written in the heart” of our first parents. 3. The law is there logically distinguished from the covenant of works, and described as in the order of nature antecedent to it,—which it is;—the one being of necessary obligation, the other of gratuitous bestowment. 4. In the place quoted from the Confession, the law is expressly stated to have been given “as a covenant of works.” Here, the same logical distinction and order of nature are observed; and, at the same time, the dates of the two transactions are identified. If the law was “given as a covenant of works,” evidently Adam was no sooner under law than he was in covenant. 5. The provision respecting the tree is distinctly described as preceptive; is never spoken of as covenant; and is specially distinguished from that which is described as the covenant. 6. The design of the Assembly is yet more clearly indicated, if possible, by their appeal for proof to that large class of scriptures which speak of the law as essentially promissory in its nature. To these we shall presently turn.

The standard theologians are unanimous in concurrence with the Assembly. Thus, says Turretin, “The covenant of nature is that which God the Creator made with innocent man as his creature, concerning his happiness and endowment with life eternal, upon condition of perfect personal obedience. It is called natural, not on account of a natural obligation,—which God cannot owe to man;—but because it was implanted in the nature of man as he was at first made by God, and in his integrity or unbroken strength.”\*

\* Turretin. Theol., Locus viii. Quæst. liii. § 5. To the same purpose, see Van Mastricht, at the head of this chapter.

The Scriptures are full and conclusive, everywhere, to the effect that a promise of life was an element incorporated essentially in the moral law. Thus Paul says, “To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.”—Rom. iv. 4. And again, “The law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them.”—Gal. iii. 12. The same thing is intimated in Rom. viii. 3:—“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” This language intimates, that the reason why eternal life is not now conferred by the law, is, that man's native corruption and infirmity of flesh preclude perfect obedience. It would be wearisome to recite the many passages of the Scriptures, both in the Old and the New Testament, to the same effect. In fact, the language already quoted from Paul—“The man that doeth them shall live in them”—constitutes a formula which occurs continually, as the expression of the essentially promissory character of the law, as given to man. See Lev. xviii. 5; Neh. ix. 29; Ezek. xx. 11, 13, 21; and Rom. x. 5. When the lawyer came to Jesus, tempting him, and inquiring what he must do to inherit eternal life, the reply of our Saviour distinctly affirms the same thing:—“What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he, answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: This do, and thou shalt live.”—Luke x. 26–28. Similar was his answer to the young man:—“If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”—Matt. xix. 17. We surely need not any further insist on the fact, that a promise thus constantly stated as an element in the moral law, must have been co-existent with the law itself,—inscribed with it on the heart of Adam in his creation.

The fact thus ascertained, is evinced with equal clearness by the indelible impress of the promise, now remaining on the hearts of all men. Wherever is found the blood of Adam's race, there are exhibited the lines of the law, written on the heart itself, in the very terms stated by Paul:—“The man that doeth them shall



live in them." It is this law with its promise surviving the wreck of the fall, which induces such persistent though hopeless efforts on the part of men, to purchase salvation by deeds of merit. Indelibly as the law in its penal terrors is engraven, its testimony is no more clear than is that which announces a promise, which was once addressed to an ability equal to its demands; but now only serves to discover to men their weakness and ruin, by the unavailing struggles after a legal righteousness, in which it engages them. To this Paul alludes in Rom. ii. 13-15:—"Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

But another fact, of great importance in itself, and conclusive on the present subject, is the purchase of salvation by Jesus Christ, under the terms of this very law, promising life to obedience. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Rom. viii. 3. "He was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Rom. iii. 25, 26. This subject will, however, be more fully presented hereafter.

It is, therefore, certain, that the promise of life did not originate in the positive precept concerning the tree of knowledge, but in the creative inscription on the heart of Adam. And hence it is, that in the narrative relating to the trees of the garden, the promise is not specified in terms, but is there only presupposed and implied, as it is in all the other providential arrangements for Adam.

The conclusion thus attained is demanded by the very office which is assigned to the law, and the nature of the whole system, of which it constituted a fundamental and pervasive part. The design of the system is, the revelation of the glory of God. The office of the law is, the announcement and illustration of the moral perfections of the Lawgiver. The sum of its precepts is, love. The God whom it proclaims is Love. The reason by which its precepts are enforced is, the love of God,—the beauty of that holiness, of which, love, is the other name. Sovereign justice vindicates itself, in the penal terrors, which it arrays against transgression. And can it be imagined that this will be the only sanction to such a law? Shall the gracious Lawgiver proclaim the fearfulness of his indignation, and the terrible majesty of his consuming vengeance, against his enemies;—and, yet, shall love have no pledge of grace, to his obedient people? Shall the law, which declares his love, convey to his creatures no experience of its embrace? Certainly, no promise was due to the creatures, as of right. But a law, however holy just and good in its provisions, the only sanctions of which had been terrors, would have been wanting in an essential element, to constitute it a true and fitting revelation of the character of Him who has become the God of our salvation. If goodness is seen anywhere, then must it, with especial radiance, shine in that eternal law, upon the deep and abiding foundations of which were laid the provisions of that primeval covenant, wherein, on man's behalf, Righteousness and Peace kissed each other in the midst of the eternal throne. If God delights in his righteousness and justice, and proclaims them in the terrors of the curse, he has equal pleasure in his love, and delight in the exercise of condescending goodness toward the works of his hands. And, in setting forth the laws of his kingdom, as he has incorporated the penal sanction with the law, for an attestation to his holiness, against transgressors; so has he inscribed the pledges of the covenant, in an identity as intimate; attesting his love and grace to the obedient. And it is a striking illustration of the nature and design of all these provisions,—that, whilst the law abideth forever, and the promises





of the covenant will survive even the ruin of the fall, and be possessed forever in heaven,—the penal threatening does not thus survive; but, with the lost enemies of God, cast out, its authority and dominion will exist only in hell. The law that rules heaven's blessed inhabitants will know no sanction of wrath;—it will proclaim no alternative of terror. Its only argument—as, its only precept—is, love. Its only sanction is the promise.

In full accordance with the views here presented, is the fact, that we have no example of the promulgation of the law from God, even to fallen man, nor reason to believe that it has ever occurred in any case in the universe, in which the precepts were not accompanied with gratuitous promises, superadded to the preceptive and penal provisions.

It now becomes necessary to consider more particularly what was the meaning of the introduction of the trees of life, and of knowledge, and the provisions respecting them;—

§ 4. *The trees of life and of knowledge.* and what relation they bore to the law and promise.

1. The reservation of the tree of knowledge constituted a most gracious and significant definition of the extent and entireness of the sovereignty conferred upon Adam, over the earth and all that was in it. Had the inaugural decree been in general terms,—“Let him have dominion over all the earth,”—there would have been room to question whether very extensive limitations were not intended,—whether large reservations were not implied in the very nature of the case. But when a specific exception is formally made in the very deed of gift itself, the inference is hence justly deduced, that the defined exception is exclusive of all others. The same propriety which induced the specification of the one, would have caused others to be named, had they existed. Hence, the prohibition of the fruit of the one tree was a confirmation and seal to the bestowment of all things beside.

2. The prohibition was a becoming and signal indication of the Maker's reservation to himself of the eminent domain of earth and the creatures. Having given to man a dominion absolute and universal “over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl

of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth;” over “every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree, yielding seed;” man was admonished, by the reservation of a single tree, insignificant and valueless in itself, that the ultimate supremacy still belonged to God,—that all his large possessions were merely loaned to him by his Creator's goodness, and subject to be recalled at his pleasure; and hence that all were to be held under homage to the Giver, and in subordination to his glory.

3. It served as a test of man's obedience, simple, infallible, and easily appreciated by the intelligent creatures. The question is sometimes asked,—Why all the tremendous interests of heaven and hell were staked on so trivial a matter as the eating of the forbidden fruit? The point to be determined was, whether man would in unwavering rectitude hold to the great end for which he was made,—whether he would cheerfully and perseveringly bow with implicit deference to the sovereignty, and do the will, of his Maker. The object of the test is, not the satisfaction of Him who, searching Adam's inmost heart, could there without experiment detect the first emotions of rebellion; but,—the declaration of His glory and vindication of His dealings with man, to man and the witnessing intelligences of heaven. For such a purpose, any positive precept will serve; and the simplest requirement, the most insignificant limitation, better than any other; because it presents the least temptation to transgression, and leaves the simple issue of obedience unburdened by any complex questions or relations.

Still further, the test employed was an infallible one. The inquiry is sometimes made,—What if Adam had not eaten the fruit, but had sinned in some other way? The supposition is an impossible one. Such is the constitution of the human heart, that it necessarily and instantaneously assails any badge of a rejected sovereignty. It were as reasonable to suppose that the galley-slave who has toiled in chains, should continue to wear the badges of his slavery, retaining on his neck and limbs the collar and manacles engraven with the name of the master whom



he has murdered, and tokens of the tyranny from which he has fled; as to suppose that Adam should have cast off his allegiance to God, and yet have failed to assert the liberty which he thus assumed, by trampling on the seal of obedience. Why is it, that, in every insurrection against human governments, the first attack is against the insignia of the government which they seek to overthrow? Why was it, that, when the boys of the Polytechnic School rushed forth, and threw themselves into the midst of the insurgent population of Paris, their first act was to tear from their caps and shoulders the badges of their allegiance to the king? Why do the revolutionists so eagerly assail and destroy the statues of the monarchy, the gorgeous furniture of the palace, the canopied throne of the sovereign, and even the very tombs of his ancestors? It is the development of a principle, which, if not essential in the constitution of rational beings, is at least indelibly enstamped on the nature of man. Hence it was, that our first parents, once rejecting the sovereignty of God, must, by an inevitable necessity of their nature, signalize that act, by contempt manifested to any precept whatever which God had enjoined.

4. A seal is a significant symbol, used for the purpose of formal and public attestation, to the confirming of a document between parties. Such a purpose was fulfilled by the trees of life and of knowledge, constituting, as we have already seen, seals, the one of the promise of life, and the other of the penalty of death, annexed to the moral law. The law having been given, accompanied with its alternative sanctions, God plants these trees, gives them their names, and communicates to Adam the ordinances respecting them; and in so doing declares, "These trees be witnesses to my faithfulness, and the unchangeable integrity of my law. The tree of life will witness, that your obedience shall have the reward of life; whilst the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, testifies that transgression shall be followed with my curse. As you eat of the one, strengthen yourself in obedience, by the hope it cherishes; and as you behold the forbidden fruit of the other, beware of the curse which it proclaims!"

5. The prohibition respecting the tree of knowledge was the

introduction of the positive form of the covenant; of which we shall speak presently. It is possible that some one may object, to what has been thus far presented, that, although the law is now constantly accompanied with the promise of life, it was not so known to Adam; and that whatever may have been the secret meaning of the symbols which surrounded him, they were not so understood by him. In reply, we ask, Can any one imagine the Spirit of God in the heart of unfallen Adam to have been less intelligent than in the prophets and apostles, his fallen children? Was the law which is written on the heart, less legible before the fall, than now, even in the heathen world, where it plainly reads, "Do, and live"? In short, the objection implies, that the pledge of life on condition of obedience, was only given after transgression had made the attainment impossible;—that, whilst Adam was surrounded with most significant symbols and seals of the promise, their meaning was hidden from him, and the pledge concealed, knowledge of which might have been the means of securing his obedience, and consequent happiness; and that this was done only to mock the imbecility of his fallen seed, by the subsequent disclosure to them of the hidden meaning, and announcement of a blessed alternative, now beyond their reach!

Having gained this point, we are prepared to entertain the question, whether the transaction between God and Adam, which we have here discussed, constituted a covenant. Here, a clear understanding of terms is necessary, in order to any satisfactory conclusions. The following definitions indicate the sense in accordance with which we employ the specified terms. A law is a precept promulgated by a sovereign; it is a mandate of rightful authority; commonly accompanied by a penal sanction. A promise is a simple contract made by one party with another. "A promise is in the nature of a verbal covenant; and wants nothing but the solemnity of writing and sealing, to make it absolutely the same."\* A covenant is a contract be-

§ 5. The promise was a covenant.

\* Blackstone, iii. 157.





tween two parties, by which one or each promises to the other to do, or not to do, a specified thing. The essential characteristic of a covenant is, that it brings one party, or each, under a voluntary obligation to the other.

In law, a technical distinction is made between a simple contract and a covenant; consisting in the fact that the former is without, and the latter with, a seal. "A covenant is the agreement or consent of two or more, by deed in writing, sealed and delivered, whereby either or one of the parties doth promise the other that something is done already or shall be done afterwards."\* "An executory contract is an agreement of two or more persons, upon sufficient consideration, to do or not to do a particular thing. The agreement is either under seal, or not under seal. If under seal, it is denominated a specialty." "As an agreement, valid in law, necessarily requires parties, a sufficient consideration, and an object, all these essential members of the definition ought to be stated, or the definition is imperfect. A sufficient consideration is, in the purview of the English law, essential to the legal obligation of a contract; and the only difference between simple contracts and specialties is that, in the latter case, the consideration is presumed; and so strongly, that the obligor is estopped, by the solemnity of the instrument, from averring a want of consideration."†

In divine covenants, there is generally an accompanying seal. But this is neither essential nor invariable. Thus, the Abrahamic covenant was made when Abram was seventy-five years old, (Gen. xii. 1-4;); and was expressly declared to be a covenant when he was not more than eighty-four. "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land."—Gen. xv. 18. And yet, it was not until the patriarch was ninety-nine years of age, that the seal of the covenant was instituted. (Gen. xvii. 1, 10.) The essential matter in a covenant is the mutual stipulation; or, as defined by Kent, parties, a sufficient consideration, and an object.

Of a covenant, these things are to be observed. (1.) As to

\* Terms of Law, Plowd. 308; in Sheppard's Touchstone, Ch. vii. § 1.

† Kent, Com. 460.

the parties, equality is not necessary. In this respect all that is requisite is, that the parties be competent to the responsibilities which, by the terms of the agreement, attach to them severally. A parent and child, a master and servant, a sovereign and subject, may enter into covenant; provided it calls for nothing of the weaker party which he is unable to perform. It is also an undeniable fact that God and man may enter into covenant. The Scriptures narrate several examples of the kind, which are by the Holy Spirit expressly called covenants, and which are found, on examination, to contain all the elements of such a transaction. The Abrahamic covenant is described in the 17th chapter of Genesis; the covenant of Sinai, in Ex. xxxiv. 27; and the covenant with David, celebrated in the lxxxixth and other Psalms. (2.) It is not necessary to the creation of a covenant that both parties be in every instance active in its formation. If the silent party is, by the terms of the contract, brought under obligation for the performance of any thing not already due, his express consent is requisite. But, if the obligation already rests on him, the covenant may take effect, even though he be inactive or hostile. Thus God, by Moses, declares to Israel, "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day. . . . Lest there be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God. . . . The Lord will not spare him."—Deut. xxix. 14-20. (3.) The condition of the agreement must be a valuable consideration. It may be a duty of native and essential obligation; as, when a parent agrees with his son, "If you will take care of me in my old age, you shall have such a share of my estate." It may be a lawful precept, made by a rightful authority. Or it may be something altogether new, and discretionary with the party to whom it is proposed. In the latter case, as already stated, express consent is requisite. In the two former, it is not; for the reason that the party has no right to refuse acquiescence, and hence justice and the common sense of mankind concur in presuming it of him and holding him right-





fully bound by obligations to which it was his duty to have cordially consented. He may not plead his own wrongful declination in bar of the responsibilities which he ought cheerfully to have assumed.

To apply these principles to the case before us. Here are two parties,—God, “the rewarder of them that diligently seek him,”—Heb. xi. 6; and Adam,—fully competent, severally, to the several obligations which are prescribed in the transaction. Here is man’s perfect obedience, which God graciously condescends to accept as a valuable consideration, although in no way profitable to Him. This condition is a duty of necessary and infeasible obligation; in regard to which, therefore, Adam’s acquiescence was not essential, although it was undoubtedly given. Here is eternal life, the object proposed to man, to be obtained upon the condition of his obedience. All these, the essential elements in the covenant, belonged to its original and native constitution, as written on Adam’s heart in his creation. To them, add the seals which were afterward given in the trees of life and of knowledge. Thus have we every feature of the most solemn form of covenant action.

Of the seals, however, strictly speaking, the tree of life alone confirmed the covenant. The tree of knowledge was the seal of the curse of the law. “The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was . . . entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of internal, perfect and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge, and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.”\*

We have said that Adam acquiesced in the terms of the covenant. That such was the case, follows inevitably from two considerations. Those terms were originally engraved on Adam’s heart in his creation, as we have already seen. To this, the assertion of a failure on his part to approve of them is itself a contradiction in terms. Not only so, but the condition which bound Adam was perfect obedience. If Adam, therefore, withheld ac-

\* Larger Catechism, Question 20.

quiescence in the covenant, it is in other words to say, that he refused to recognise the duty of obedience which already rested upon him,—a refusal which would have constituted instantaneous rebellion, and entirely precluded any further relations of amity with God. On this supposition, his first entrance on the stage is in the attitude of transgression,—a supposition contradicted by all the facts of the case, and which implies him to have been created apostate.

Our conclusion from this inquiry is, that God did most graciously inscribe on Adam’s heart the provisions of a covenant which proposed to him eternal life, upon condition of perfect obedience to the divine law; and afterward sealed the law and covenant by the transactions respecting the trees of life and knowledge; and that Adam did, at first passively, but fully, and afterward, upon the coming in of the positive precept, actively and cordially, consent to the terms, and accept the promise of life thus made. This transaction is, by the Spirit of God, expressly called a covenant. Hosea vi. 7:—“They like men (אֲדָמִים, like Adam) have transgressed the covenant.”

But, did we pause with the enunciation of the covenant in this its native form, we should leave out of the account a most important element, in the matter of our relation to Adam, and interest in the covenant as made with him. We have seen the law to have been inscribed on his heart in covenant form, constituting the covenant of works. That it, thus laying hold of his nature, was not only a covenant with him individually, but with all who were in him, the entire race of man, we shall show hereafter. Had the covenant continued in this its original constitution, without change or limitation, the whole race must have passed through a perpetual probation, each individual first in his entire ancestral line, and then in his own person;—a probation in Adam until the birth of Seth, in him until the birth of Enos, and so on, until the occurrence of what in that case would have been the almost certain result,—the fall and ruin of all; each one becoming apostate, either by a personal act, or in the loins of some ancestor. The result thus pointed out, it would seem, must cer-

§ 6. Positive constitution of the covenant.



tainly have followed; because the covenant, in its native form, contained no provisions for the termination of the trial, and confirmation in holiness; and, since a fallible being is one who may fall, the chances of apostasy, however small at the beginning, would, in the lapse of eternity, become overwhelmingly great.

The positive transaction respecting the tree of knowledge, as we have seen, did not introduce the covenant:—it was already engraven in Adam's heart. Nor did it, in the slightest degree, change or modify the terms. These were, already and unchangeably, "Do, and live;—transgress, and die." It did not constitute Adam our head, for this he was, by the native constitution of the covenant; as we shall presently show. But, on the other hand, the prohibition of the fruit of the forbidden tree did effect a change in man's relation to the covenant, which is fundamental to the whole case, as it now stands. It constitutes that provision a most wonderful display of the amazing riches of God's boundless wisdom and love to man; rendering it pregnant with all the treasures of grace and immortality which flow to us from that same covenant, as it is now fulfilled in Christ. We have seen, that the force of the precept respecting the tree of knowledge was, to limit the period of probation. It reduced the general provisions of the covenant to specific terms,—terms limited to a specified act of obedience, and to a time necessarily brief; as the action and obedience contemplated in the transaction had respect to a perishing tree, and a transient garden home. Not only was the probation limited to a finite period, but to a period so brief as to imply the close of probation for the whole race, in the person of Adam, before the entrance of his posterity upon the stage. This is seen, in the fact that the condition was located in that garden, which was enclosed by God, and fenced off from the rest of the earth, as the temporary home of our first parents; and not designed for their permanent abode; nor at all for that of their posterity; since the world, in all its length and breadth, was given to them; and the duty laid upon them of occupying and subduing it all.—"God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have do-

minion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."—Gen. i. 28. "Have dominion,"—a dominion of which we witness the coronation scene, in the review of the creatures, and bestowment of names upon them;—a dominion, however, which could not be fully exercised by man, whilst confined within the limits of the garden. No candid mind can review the whole narrative of the dealings of God with Adam and Eve, without being brought to the conclusion, that the Edenic dispensation—the probation attaching to the tree of knowledge—was, from the first, designed to be exceedingly brief,—to be terminated, if Adam had continued in obedience, by a confirmation, rest from trial, and entrance on the reward,—the early occurrence of which was aptly shadowed, in the early coming of the Sabbath, which shed its holy and peaceful light on the first evening of Adam's life. The effect, and specific design, of this limiting of the probation to one, in whom was comprehended the common nature of all, was, to open the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Adam, under the terms of this very covenant; so that, by virtue of his personal and temporary obedience, all his seed, to whom he imparts his Spirit, and so unites them to himself, are endowed thereby with a title in the merits of his finished righteousness, wrought by that obedience; and, in the life, which was promised in the covenant, upon fulfilment of its terms. The fact, that the temporary obedience of the second Adam was accepted, as fulfilment of the terms of the covenant, on behalf of all his people, is conclusive to the effect, that a like temporary faithfulness on the part of the first Adam would have secured eternal life to all his posterity; since in his whole covenant position and action he was "the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 14. We do not, at present, insist further on this point; because it is inseparably involved in all that has gone before and shall follow; and because it will not be questioned by any, who assent to the evidence presented on the other connected parts of the doctrine.

To object, therefore, to the positive transaction between God and Adam, is, to complain that God did not give us a myriad





chances of falling, instead of one; since the only effect of that transaction was, to secure confirmation and eternal life to man, upon condition of Adam's temporary obedience; instead of the race being held to a perpetual probation, in Adam and in themselves. To complain of being held responsible for Adam's sin, is, to object to being held to obedience at all; since, in any case, Adam's sin was our sin; the forces which are in us,—the nature which we inherit from him, is the very nature which, in him, rebelled;—the same, not in kind, merely,—but, as flowing continuously from him to us.

The nature of the life promised, remains to be considered. The nature, the penalty of the law, we have seen to have signified, *the wrath of God exercised against sin.* Correlative to this is the meaning of the word, life, as used to express the promise of the covenant. The idea designed by it; is not that of continued existence, merely; nor, in fact, has it, otherwise than by implication, reference to the continuance of existence, at all; but, to the favour of God, and the happiness which it must convey to the creature on whom he smiles. This was the meaning of the word, and the essential matter of the covenant, as addressed to Adam. So the Psalmist declares, "In his favour is life."—Psalm xxx. 5. Hence the language of our Saviour:—"This is life eternal; that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. The same definition is illustrated, by the contrast stated by John the Baptist:—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii. 36. As the elements which appear in the infliction of the penal sanction of the law differ according to the variety of the natures that suffer; so, on the other hand, the favour of God, which is expressed by the one word, life, develops, in its action, elements of happiness, differing according to the diversity of the natures in which it is realized. The life, or blessedness, enjoyed by the angelic hosts under the smile of their Creator, varies thus circumstantially from that which would have been realized by man in continued innocency; this, again, differs from that to

which redeemed men are called; and none of these is altogether similar to that of the incarnate Word, who says of himself, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."—John v. 26.

The promise secured the continual smile of God, resting upon and prospering Adam, in body and soul, in his labours and enjoyments, in his possessions and pursuits, in his person, his family, and his race; in time, till the close of his probation; and more richly still in a blessed eternity, where, confirmed in holiness, and translated from earth, he should possess the unspeakable joys of God's presence forever. Hedged in by God's favour, he would have been free alike from evil or alarm. Whilst every enjoyment had been complete, and every pleasure perfect, no sorrow had occurred, to mar his satisfaction, nor anxiety, to moderate it. In short, the promise secured to him the omnipotent favour of his Creator, resting upon and blessing him, in every element of his being, and all the compass and eternal continuance of his existence.

To Adam's body, the favour of God, pledged in the covenant, secured the enjoyment of perfect and perpetual health, unalloyed by sickness or pain, and unexposed to accident,—the perfection of all his members and of the exercise of all his senses, adapted and attuned, as they were, to appreciate and enjoy the harmonies of surrounding nature, as it smiled in the light of God's favour,—the elasticity and the zest of unfailing youth,—unwearying vigour, exempt from the exhaustion of toil, and the debility of hunger,—and at length, without dissolution or return to dust, transformation and immortality in heaven.

To his mind, it pledged unerring knowledge of all that was requisite, either for the performance of his duties, the enjoyment of God's blessings, or preparation for the higher employments and more exalted joys of heaven,—perfect freedom from aberration or obscurity,—continual growth of all his capacities in their exercise,—and entire freedom from those apprehensions and alarms, that disquietude and disappointment, and those multiplied sources of mental affliction, which the curse has infused into the cup of life.



But especially did the covenant seal all spiritual blessings to Adam. This involved the perpetual vigour and continual growth of all the features of God's image in his soul,—free and unreserved communion with his condescending and beneficent Creator,—and final confirmation in holiness, termination of the state of trial, and translation to a higher sphere,—to life in heaven,—to that mansion, of which it is written, "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Psalm xvi. 11.

## CHAPTER X.

## ADAM THE COVENANT HEAD OF THE RACE.

THUS far we have viewed Adam as an individual, personally the object of God's creative and providential power and care, sustaining to his Maker relations of peculiar privilege and responsibility, by gift and covenant.

§ 1. *Proof of Adam's headship.*

But, did we stop here, we should have exceedingly inadequate conceptions of his real position, in transacting with God; and of the true extent of the responsibilities which he sustained, and the ruin which he incurred by his sin. In creating, his Maker endowed him with a prolific constitution; and in the blessing pronounced upon him at his creation, prior to any of the external actions by which the covenant of nature was formally sealed, he was ordained to multiply,—to become, of one, the myriads of the human race. In all God's dealings with him, he is regarded in this light, as the root and father of a race who should proceed from him. They, by virtue of this derivative relation to him, were contemplated by God, as, in him their head, parties in all the transactions which had respect to the covenant. Thus, they sinned in his sin; fell in his apostasy; were depraved in his corruption; and in him became children of Satan and of the wrath of God.

By the phrase, covenant head, we do not mean that Adam was by covenant made head of the race; but that, being its head, by virtue of the nature with which God had endowed him, he stood as such in the covenant. Adam sustained in his person two distinct characters, the demarcation of which must be carefully observed, if we would attain to any just conclusions, as to the relation he held toward us, and the effects upon us of his actions. First, in him was a nature of a specific character, the common



endowment of the human race; and transmissible to them, by propagation, with their being. Again, he was an individual person, endowed with the nature thus bestowed on him in common with his posterity. Personal actions, and relations of his, which did not affect his nature, were peculiar to him as a private person. But such as affected his nature, with him, and to the same extent, involved all those to whom that nature was given, in its bestowal on him. He was endowed, as we have seen, with knowledge, righteousness and holiness; and with a liberty of will, which, whilst fully competent to stand in untarnished and perpetual holiness and rectitude, was free and unrestricted in the power of apostatizing from God, and embracing sin instead of holiness. Any exertion of his will or powers, the effect of which had been to strengthen holy principles within him, affecting as it would his nature, would have been imputed to those who in him were partakers in his native holiness. Any act of his will, or exertion of any of the powers of his being, the tendency of which had been to weaken those principles in his nature, would have been in like manner imputed. On the contrary, actions which bore no relation to such effects as these, were personal to the actor, and not imputed to others. To the former class belonged acts of obedience to God, such as tilling the ground, observing the Sabbath, and worshipping God,—acts, which, by the force of habit, gave increasing strength to the holy nature in which he was created;—or any want of watchfulness in view of the dangers which were at hand, or failure to seek divine strength to uphold him in integrity. To the latter class of actions pertained such as partaking of food, and indulging in nightly slumber,—acts which had no special moral character, and exerted no plastic influence on his nature.

Adam was thus constituted, and the covenant was engraved on his heart and nature, as he was a propagative being, the father of the race. As thus engraved, it is actually transmitted to us, although the transgression has abrogated its power as a covenant of life. It follows inevitably, from these facts, that it was given to Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity,—that he was in it their representative; receiving the covenant

for them; and acting under it on their behalf, as well as on his own.

In all God's other dealings with Adam he is looked upon and addressed, not as an individual merely, but as representing in his person all men. So it was in his endowment with God's image, and with the name, "Adam,"—a name not only proper to his person, but in the Bible constantly recognised and used as the generic name of the race. So that, in fact, when we say that God made a covenant with Adam, it is equivalent, by the very force of the terms, to saying, that the covenant was made with the human race. This relation of Adam's name, and the representative office in which he was originally contemplated, is indicated very forcibly in the use of the plural, which occurs in the decree of creation:—"Let us make man (Adam) in our image, after our likeness; and let THEM have dominion."—Gen. i. 26. The blessing,—"*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion,*"—which is in the same connection, and in fulfilment of that creative decree,—in terms addresses not him alone, but in him all his seed. It was, as multiplied, that they were to replenish, subdue and rule the earth. So, too, the declaration that "*it is not good for man to be alone,*" and the institution and blessing upon marriage, all contemplated not Adam alone, but in him all his children. To it Christ appeals, quoting the law recorded in Genesis ii. 24, as of perpetual and universal obligation:—"For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore," says Christ, "they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."—Matt. xix. 5, 6.

That the curse, which was addressed to Adam, upon occasion of the transgression, included all his seed, is unquestionable. If it be viewed in its more extensive comprehension, as including the fierceness of the wrath and curse of almighty God, this is in operation by nature against all the children of Adam. They are all "by nature the children of wrath."—Eph. ii. 3. If it be viewed in its more restricted sense, as having regard to the positive terms in which it was pronounced upon our first parents, this also in-





cludes all the race. All Eve's daughters bitterly prove that not she only was meant, when it was said to her, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."—Gen. iii. 16. All the sons of Adam realize their interest in the sad inheritance of the curse which he incurred, in barrenness to the earth, and toil and sorrow to its possessor. All, too surely, anticipate a personal experience of the dread assurance, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The curse of the violated covenant, thus addressed to Adam, but, in the terms so addressed, denouncing all his seed, shows conclusively that the transgression of Adam implicated them,—that in the covenant of which that curse was the sanction, they were recognised in his person.

We are not, however, left to mere inference on this question, strong and conclusive as are its deductions. The statements of the Scriptures are clear and explicit in respect to Adam's representative office. They will be considered hereafter.

Here, however, it is necessary to enter more particularly into consideration of the manner in which Adam was invested with the functions of a representative. That the cause of that office was the will of God, is not disputed by any who recognise the office. But it is a question how the Creator gave effect to his will in this matter. Was it by a positive arrangement, unessential to the completeness of the constitution of nature, extraneous to it, and superimposed upon it after the work of creation was complete? Or, did He so order that the relation between the representative body and its head should be an organic one,—a relation implied in the very structure of Adam's nature, incorporated with the substance of his being, and constituting an element essential to the completeness and symmetry of the whole system, physical, moral and spiritual? By many orthodox theologians of the present day, it is held, that the representative relation of Adam did not exist, until the positive provision was made respecting the tree of knowledge; when it was constituted by a decretive act of God's sovereignty. We are constrained to take the opposite view,

and to maintain, with the older divines, that the relation is as old as the first inscription of the covenant of nature on the heart of man in his creation. We look upon it as the essential element in the parental relation as it subsisted in Adam,—the element which gives the family constitution all its significance. Purposing to introduce a system of representation into his moral government, God gave effect to that purpose by the manner in which the parental relation was constituted between Adam and his seed.

Here, it is necessary to guard against overlooking the inseparable and essential relation which Adam's natural headship sustains to his federal office; and at the same time to avoid confounding them together, in disregard of the important distinction which subsists between them. There is, in fact, a threefold distinction, which it is needful here to observe. Adam was our natural head, as he was the source of our being. He was our moral head, as his nature was so constituted as to flow to us, not simply as it was in him at his creation, but enstamped with whatever moral attitude he might occupy at the time of the generation of his posterity; whether upright or apostate. He was our federal head, as the covenant was addressed to, and enstamped upon, his nature, so as to endow it with the promises conditioned upon obedience, and to bind it under the penalties in case of apostasy; so that his posterity, in deriving their being and moral nature from Adam, must receive it in whatever attitude it occupied toward the covenant when transmitted from him.

It is perfectly conceivable that Adam might have been so made as to be the natural head of the race, without being either its moral or federal head. He might have been so constituted creatively, as to propagate a posterity possessed of that image, natural and moral, in which he was created, irrespective of any act of apostasy of which he as an individual might have been guilty. Something analogous to this now actually takes place in the case of regenerate parents, who, as natural heads, transmit to their offspring a nature, not renewed, as is their own, but apostate and depraved, as received by them originally. He might



have been made the moral head of the race, without being its federal head; and that in two ways. The moral law might have been written on his nature; so that transgression by him should induce a revolution in that nature, and involve its transmission, thus apostate and under the curse, to his seed; without any covenant provisions, addressed either to him or them. This, in fact, is the very thing which semi-Pelagians assert to have been the case. Or, the case thus supposed might have been circumstantially modified, by the making of a covenant personally with Adam, without inscribing it on his nature, and, hence, without involving the heirs of that nature in its provisions; leaving them to a legal responsibility, as in the case already supposed.

But although it was thus possible for Adam to have been made merely the natural, or the natural and moral, head of the race, without being its federal head,—the reverse was impossible. In order that he should be their federal head, it was necessary that they should derive from him both their being and the moral attitude of their nature. Nor was it possible that the law and covenant should have been engraven, as it was, in his propagative nature, without his being the covenant head of the race. In fact, that inscription constituted his inauguration into that office. The phrase, natural headship, is sometimes used, by way of contrast or opposition to federal headship; as inclusive of every thing not involved in the latter term,—expressing the derivation, from Adam, of being and moral nature.

It will be remembered that, in this view, we do not ignore the positive transaction respecting the forbidden tree; nor fail to appreciate its importance. Of it we have spoken, as constituting a most signal and essential element in the whole matter of Adam's position before God; and our relation to that position. It was a provision of the purest grace, consisting in a limitation of the responsibilities of man, and a reduction of the probation, from being perpetual, to the brief period in which Adam should have been alone in the garden, prior to the birth of any of his sons. The point upon which we here insist is, that in the purely sovereign and gratuitous provisions made by God in respect to the forbidden tree, neither Adam nor his sons were subjected to

any new obligations, nor involved in any responsibility not already by nature resting upon them. It was a limitation and reduction, and not an extension of our native responsibilities, as in covenant with God. We are not held accountable for Adam's breach of the covenant, in consequence of the transaction respecting the tree; but because of the inscription of the covenant in Adam's nature, and our in-being in him, in whose nature it was inscribed. So far as this point is concerned, no other effect results to us from the positive constitution, than this;—that, by it, God engaged to accept the temporary obedience of one, in whom the nature of all was embraced; and, upon condition of that obedience, to grant to him and all in him confirmation and life. Whereas, without such provision, that nature was under a perpetual liability to fall,—first in Adam, and then in his seed; and so, to involve in ruin the transgressor, with all to whom the apostate nature should flow from him.

The point which we now propose to establish is, that we were federally in Adam, by virtue of his investiture with our common nature, with the covenant inscribed in it;—that the covenant being written on his nature, and provision made, in the parental relation, for the transmission to us of that nature, thus bound in covenant,—the necessary effect of the whole arrangement was, to constitute Adam our federal head, by virtue of the parental relation thus characterized.

Our first argument is derived from the fact, that the covenant is actually found in our nature, as derived from our first parents; *§ 3. Proof of* and that, as thus received, it is clothed in the *our doctrine.* altered integrity of its terms; and accompanied with an indelible record of its having been broken, prior to any action or consciousness in us as individuals. "The covenant of nature is so called, because it not only enforces obedience to that law, which as to its chief features was inscribed in man's nature, but also because it attached to the universal nature of man, even of those who were yet to have existence by the order of generation."\* The alternative which the facts present, is, either, that the con-

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\* Van Maastricht, Lib. III. Cap. xii. § 8.





ventional terms which were first addressed to Adam's intellect merely, through the ear, were transferred to his nature for transmission to his seed, after those terms had been rendered futile by transgression,—or, that they were originally given, not by conventional agreement, but by creative inscription on Adam's heart and nature, as an element in his generative constitution, binding all to whom that nature should come. Here is the unquestionable and important fact, that the covenant, as inscribed on Adam's heart, is transmitted with his nature to all his seed; and as it was broken by him prior to their procreation, and had impressed the indelible traces of that violation upon his heart, so precisely is it reproduced in us;—the same in terms; and the same in the evidences of transgression. As the die, which is stamped upon the outer of many sheets of paper, not only impresses its figure upon that, but strikes through, and marks with the same image the whole, so is it here. The creative voice that addressed Adam's nature, saying,—Do and live,—spake not to him alone; but, transmitted through that nature, is heard by us, in the same promise,—Do and live. The same curse which by the conditions of the covenant fell upon Adam's soul, and blighted his whole nature, reappears continually, as an element inseparably connected with that nature, as from him it flows to his numerous seed. The same terror of the curse which caused Adam to hide from the presence of his Maker, still pursues us, and creates in us terror at that same presence. It is thus abundantly clear, that, whatever provisions may have been made by positive dispensation with Adam, the covenant, in its original form, as written on his heart, made provision, not for him only, but for his seed with him; including them in its engagements, and holding them under its sanctions; and this, not only for personal but for native conformity, in the first parents, in whom the common nature was so invested and endowed.

Another fact, which leads us directly to the same conclusion, is the manner in which Christ came under the covenant of works, and fulfilled it. Of this we shall have occasion to treat more in detail hereafter. For the present, it is only necessary to notice, that the righteousness of Christ is meritoriously ac-

ceptable, no otherwise, than as it is conformity to the law, as a covenant of works. Under the obligations of this covenant, he came, by becoming a son of Adam and seed of the woman. He was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. But that the law under which he came was not the positive precept concerning the tree of knowledge, we need not prove. The law which Christ obeyed,—the covenant which he fulfilled, was that which was written on Adam's heart. Had it been otherwise, the tree of knowledge should have been preserved; and the obedience of the Son of God, must have related to the prohibition respecting that tree. The fact, therefore, that Christ came, under the covenant of nature, and not under the positive precept; and that he not only fulfilled the requirements of that covenant, but endured its curse, as a son of Adam,—thus expiating the sins of those who, in the covenant of grace, were given to him, to be so redeemed,—shows conclusively, that in the covenant of nature, Adam stood as the representative of his race. This is unquestionable, inasmuch as the very covenant which Adam our head violated, must by the second Adam be restored; the very precept which the one as our representative transgressed, it was necessary that the other, coming into his place, should obey; and the very curse which the transgression incurred, must the Restorer endure. In short, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the last Adam, was "the second man;" 1 Cor. xv. 47,—the immediate substitute and successor of Adam, "the first man," upon his failure. His position, as such, differed from Adam's in nothing, except in the accidents which were referable to their several persons. If, then, the second Adam fulfilled the covenant, in its native form, and not as embodied in the positive precept respecting the tree, the first Adam was under it, as representative, in its native form; and could not, therefore, have been called to that office, in a positive transaction, which supervened upon its native constitution, and occurred after it.

In God's other dealings with Adam, where any conventional representation is out of the question, he is yet addressed and



dealt with as the impersonation of the whole race. So it was, in his endowment with God's image; in the blessing, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion;" in the gift of the herbs and fruits, for food; and in the institution and blessing of marriage.

In fact, Adam's representative office would seem to be the key, and the only key, to the whole family institution, and to the reason of the production of the entire generations of men, not from one pair only, but from one individual. As the individual Adam, he was formed by the creative hand, and the nature of the entire race implanted in him; the law and the covenant are inscribed on that nature; and the blessing of fruitfulness pronounced upon him. He is left in this solitude long enough to give it emphasis; and attention is called to it, by a special inquiry for a companion, among all the creatures of God. But none is found. Eve is then formed,—not from the dust, as was Adam; which would have been to introduce an element into the race, independent of the covenant as made by inscription in the nature of its head,—but out of his side. Thus was indicated essential equality, but responsible subordination to him as head; and communion with him in the covenant which had comprehended his entire nature. All this is very forcibly asserted by Adam, when she was brought to him. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Thus he asserts his headship and authority over her, as over a member of his own body. And still the two retain the name of the first man. "Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam."—Gen. v. 2. And when afterward the earth was filled with their teeming sons, they all, in their myriad hosts, are, at last, but Adam still. That, in the Scriptures, is the generic name of the entire race.

The parental relation is, in fact, habitually spoken of as native representative. This is so, in cases in which any conventional agreement to that effect is entirely precluded by the circumstances. Particularly is this the case, in all the covenants of which the Scriptures give us

§ 4. Other Scriptural examples.

any account, as entered into by God. Thus it was in the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son, of which we shall hereafter speak particularly. Its promise is thus stated by the Spirit of God:—"I have made a covenant with my chosen. I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations."—Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4. The representative relation of the second Adam to his people is in the Scriptures everywhere expressed in terms of the parental relation. Although, out of respect to his eternal sonship to the Father, he is perhaps never specifically called, father, yet is he the husband of a fruitful spouse,—the church; her children are his seed, begotten by him, through the mission of the incorruptible seed, the Holy Spirit, by whom they are born anew unto him. Similar is the case of Abraham. Paul declares Levi to have paid tithes in Abraham; because "he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him."—Heb. vii. 10. The representative relation of Abraham to all believers is also expressed by this title of father. So it is in the covenant:—"A father of many nations have I made thee." "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee,—to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."—Gen. xvii. 5, 7. It is in the same manner defined in the subsequent scriptures. Says Paul, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29. The same principle is illustrated in the covenant of Sinai. That covenant was made not only with the adult population, but with their little ones, and their unborn descendants. See Exodus xix, xx, and Deut. xxix. 9-13.—"Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do. Ye stand here this day, all of you, before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp; from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto him-





self, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." The ten commandments were the law of this covenant. Says Moses, "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb, . . . saying, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me," &c.—Deut. v. 2-21. In respect to the result of this transaction, we are told, that "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel." But when Joshua and all that generation were dead, "there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim."—Judges ii. 7-11. Of this apostasy of the descendants of those with whom, immediately, the covenant was made, God speaks as a breach of it:—"The covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake."—Jer. xxxi. 32. In fact, God distinctly declares, by Jeremiah, that he held Israel, in the days of that prophet, bound by the covenant of Sinai:—"Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant which I commanded your fathers, in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt."—Jer. xi. 3, 4. Nothing can be more evident, than that, in all these dealings of God with Israel, the parental office is recognised as essentially representative in its native constitution.

We might, to the same purpose, cite the covenant with Noah, and that with Jonadab the son of Rechab. The same idea is involved in the language commonly used, in the Scriptures, which represents the offspring as being an actual multiplication of the parent. "I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly."—Gen. xvii. 2. Compare Gen. i. 28; xxviii. 3. In fact, if Adam's representative office in the covenant did not have its basis in his parental relation to his

posterity, he is alone in this respect. Were this true, it would be the more remarkable, as the covenant made with Adam was undoubtedly typical of that with Christ, which is the model of all the others; or, rather, we should say, the others are but transcripts from it; as we shall hereafter see.

The representative office, which is attributed to parents in the Scriptures, is never viewed in such a light as would imply, or consist with, its having origin in any positive provision of God with parents, or in any mere assertion of God's sovereignty. On the contrary, it is uniformly introduced and treated as natively in the parents,—as essentially involved in the very structure of the parental relation itself. In fact, there is here a principle, or law of representation, which is recognised, everywhere, in the Scriptures, and is the key to a great variety of expressions there employed. It is, that community in a propagated nature constitutes such a union, or oneness, as immediately involves the possessor in all the relations, moral and legal, of that nature, in the progenitor whence it springs. There are two cases, to which this principle specially applies, and by which its correctness may be tried. The first is that of Adam and his posterity. The second is that of Christ, the head and fountain of a new nature and life to his people. A third case in which we shall hereafter see light shed upon the principle here involved, is that of Christ taking upon himself the sin of the world, by becoming a man. The force of the argument from the relation of Christ to his people, can only be appreciated by bearing constantly in mind the fact, that Adam and the covenant with him and his seed in him were expressly designed as typical of the second Adam and his seed in him, as engaged to the Father in the eternal covenant.

The principle, of which these cases are illustrations, is not to be so understood, as though the character thus conveyed were the meritorious cause of the relations predicated;—as if the believer were justified by the personal righteousness which he receives through the power of Christ's Spirit given to him. On the contrary, the union, which is constituted by virtue of the transmission of the nature, itself conveys a proprietary title in





the moral and legal relations of the head; whilst the efficient principle which thus unites, is also fruitful in effects appropriate to the nature whence it flows. Thus, the sin of Adam, and the righteousness of Christ, are severally imputed to their seed, by virtue of the union, constituted, in the one case, by the principle of natural generation, and in the other, by "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," the Holy Spirit,—the principle of the regeneration. At the same time, the power by which the union is in these cases severally wrought, produces likeness to the head. "As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 48. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6.

It is objected, that the relation between Christ and his people is a moral one; and, therefore, it must be so between Adam and his seed. True; but the relation, and the tie by which it is established, are entirely different things. The relation is moral,—that of headship in covenant. The tie is substantial;—in the one case, the Holy Spirit, dwelling in and sent forth from Christ, as an incorruptible seed,—the power of a new spiritual life, working faith;—in the other, the natural seed, the power of a corrupted nature, working depravity and death. The following parallel exhibits the corresponding relations which the Scriptures predicate of Adam and Christ. It is not only an unanswerable argument on the subject before us, but also a statement in epitome of the whole doctrine of the ruin and recovery of man, in a form which, if the Scriptures be true, is of itself an overwhelming proof of the truth of the system so unfolded,—the Calvinistic, the scriptural system of theology. In each of the cases here presented, the will of God is the ultimate cause of the whole matter. The parallel shows how that will has taken effect, unfolding in harmonious perfection and symmetrical proportion the divine holiness, wisdom, justice and grace. A careful inspection must satisfy the impartial reader, that the denial that Adam was constituted the representative of the race, by being made its father, strikes down a central pillar of the whole system of revealed truth.

THE FIRST ADAM.	THE SECOND ADAM.
The image of God.(a)	The express image.(b)
The covenant of works.	The everlasting covenant.
A transgressor. Condemned.	Obedient. Justified.
A living soul, (c)—a father,— the source of natural life.	A quickening spirit, (c)—a father, —the source of divine life.
Law of natural generation,— the corruptible seed.(d)	Law of the Spirit of life,—the incorruptible seed.(d)
<i>Birth.</i>	<i>New Birth.</i>
The flesh.	The Spirit.
The principle of natural generation, the bond of union.	The Spirit,—the incorruptible seed, the bond of union.
<i>Apostate in Adam.</i>	<i>Reconciled in Christ.</i>
By the offence of one, judgment unto condemnation.(e)	By the righteousness of one, the free gift unto justification.(e)
Many made sinners.	Many made righteous.
By nature children of wrath.(f)	Begotten again unto a lively hope.(g)
Depravity and every sin the fruits of nature.(h)	Faith and every grace the fruits of the Spirit.(h)
As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy.(i)	As is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly.(i)
<i>The image of the earthy.</i>	<i>The image of the heavenly.</i>
The carnal mind is enmity against God.(j)	He that is born of God loveth God.(k)
Growing corruption by the power of Adam's nature.(l)	Sanctification by partaking of the divine nature.(m)
Vessels of wrath fitted for destruction.(n)	Vessels of mercy prepared unto glory.(n)
Death.	Sleep.
In Adam all die.(o)	In Christ all made alive.(o)
The second death.	Eternal life.

(a) Gen. i. 26. (b) Heb. i. 3. (c) 1 Cor. xv. 45. (d) 1 Pet. i. 23, 1 John iii. 9.  
(e) Rom. v. 18, 19. (f) Eph. ii. 8. (g) 1 Pet. i. 3. (h) Gal. v. 19-23. (i) 1 Cor.  
xv. 48, 49. (j) Rom. viii. 7. (k) 1 John v. 2. (l) Eph. iv. 22. (m) 2 Pet. i. 4.  
(n) Rom. ix. 22, 23. (o) 1 Cor. xv. 22.



If the reader will attempt to modify the scheme here presented, and adapt it to the idea that the representative union of Adam and his children is formed by a mere positive dispensation, he will find that the effect is, not only to destroy the parallel, but to mar utterly the proportion and the significance of the language employed in the Scriptures, as expressive of the relations of his people to Christ. Thus, if instead of "The principle of natural generation, the bond of union,"—which here stands as the ground of the representative relation,—we substitute "A positive dispensation with Adam," not only does it obliterate the parallel, but destroys the significance and the appropriateness of all the figures which cluster around the official functions and work of the Holy Spirit. What, then, is the propriety of Christ's being called "a quickening spirit," and that in contrast with Adam, the "living soul," the fountain of natural life to the race? What, the meaning of the designation of the work of grace, as, the "new birth"? of the titles, "children of God,"—"the seed" of Christ? and of that name which is given to the Spirit—"the incorruptible seed,"—"the seed that remaineth in" those who are born of God? In regard to these last expressions, it may be objected, that in the parable of the sower (Matt. xiii.; Mark iv.) the seed is the word; and therefore it must be so in these places. But the fact of a figure being used in a particular sense in a given parable, determines nothing in respect to its meaning in other parts of the Scriptures. In the parable of the tares, the same word, seed, designates the people of God in the bosom of the church. "The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one."—Matt. xiii. 38. In the place quoted from 1 Peter i. 23, the efficient principle, the seed, and the formal instrumentality, the word, are clearly distinguished from each other, by the structure of the sentence, and the change of prepositions:—"Born again (*οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς, ἀλλὰ ἀφθάρτου*), not by the power of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, (*διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ*), through the instrumentality of the living word of God."

In fact, the apostle does not recognise the word of God in the figure of the new birth, but introduces it immediately after, (ch. ii. 2,) as, "the sincere milk" whereby the new-born are nourished:

The parallel language of Paul to the Galatians is conclusive as to the interpretation to be given to the words of Peter. Gal. iv. 23:—"He that was (*ἐκ τῆς παιδισκῆς*), of the bondwoman, was born (*κατὰ σάρκα*) after the flesh; but he that was (*ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρης*) of the freewoman, was (*διὰ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας*), by, or, in fulfilment of, the promise." In the other place, 1 John iii. 9, the word translated, seed, is different, (*σπέρμα*), the efficient principle of generation; and when it is remembered that the Holy Spirit is certainly the principle of the new nature and life in the regenerate,—that he proceedeth from the Father and the Son, (John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26); and that, although he is undoubtedly the immediate efficient agent in the new birth, the regenerate are constantly called, the children of the Father, and of Christ, but never, of the Spirit,—the inference would seem to be inevitable, that he is the seed here spoken of. Still more certain is this, when we consider the power here attributed to the indwelling seed, by which sin is impossible. Unquestionably, the efficiency here described belongs to the sanctifying Spirit, alone. In short, the indwelling of the incorruptible seed is distinctly stated as the equivalent of the new birth:—"For his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

We have stated it, as a principle traceable both in the doctrine of the ruin and of the redemption of man, that community in a propagated nature constitutes an identity, or oneness, between the offspring and their head. But we should entirely fail to exhibit the whole significance of the principle, and its importance, did we omit to trace it to its norm, in the persons of the eternal Father and his coeternal Son. Respecting the real and perfect unity and distinct personality of the blessed Three, and the eternal generation of the Son, we have already spoken. The point concerning it which is important to the present subject, is the fact that the unity of the Father and Son consists in the oneness of the divine essence, which is by generation communicated from the Father to the Son. That the relation which subsists between Christ and his people is designed to illustrate and shed forth this divine mystery, we have seen our Saviour to





assert, in his sacerdotal prayer:—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."—John xvii. 21-23. This idea runs through the whole of that most wonderful prayer. Again, in John xiv. 20:—"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

The relation of the first Adam to his race is similar to and typical of that of the second Adam to his seed; although, in this, as in all things else, the glory of the latter far exceeds that of the former; constituting a much nearer resemblance to the relation subsisting between the Father and the eternal Son. As the oneness of the Father and Son consists in the subsistence of both in one undivided essence, communicated through the eternal generation; so, Christ and his people are one by virtue of their communion in one undivided Spirit, imparted in the regeneration, inducing an identity so intimate that "he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit." In a modified resemblance to these, is the relation of Adam to his seed. He and they are one by virtue of community in a nature which, originally one, in Adam, is communicated to his posterity by generation, and is possessed by them, not, as in the other case, in common and undivided, but distributively and in severalty. And as the unity of the adorable Three does not obliterate or even obscure the several personality, so neither is there any such effect realized in respect to the second Adam, nor to the first. In the latter case particularly, the distributive mode of communion in the human nature, constitutes a broad line of demarcation, which precludes any ground of pretence that such is the effect. Whilst thus all are one in Adam, and justly responsible and condemned for the apostasy of the nature which they derive from him, each one has a distinct and several person and independent moral agency, involving several and personal obligation and responsibility before God. The immediate design of the Creator, in establishing the parental relation, as constituted in Adam, was

the introduction of a representative system. The final end of the whole dispensation was the unfolding and illustration of the inner nature of the Triune God,—that mystery, to the exposition of which, of all God's works, our world and race have been specially designated. The fact that man's nature, low and base as it is, is utterly unworthy to be compared with the glory of his Maker, no more precludes the propriety of the illustration, thence deduced, than does the inadequacy of the atom, or the universe. To reduce the mysteries of the divine subsistence to the level of the finite things by which they are revealed, is atheism. To refuse to listen to the teachings, because unworthy of his majesty, were to plunge into ignorance and infidelity, through pretence of reverence for the ineffable God.

A consideration of the only alternative, will confirm our doctrine, as to the relation of Adam's natural to his federal headship. We assume that he did unquestionably sustain the office of representative for his seed. If he occupied such a position, it must have been either by virtue of the inscription of the covenant in his nature by the creative finger, or by a positive arrangement made with Adam, subsequent to his creation. The latter view, however, is involved in hopeless difficulties, at which we can but briefly glance.

This theory ignores, altogether, the fact which is unquestionable, that the covenant was, in Adam's creation, written on his nature, in such a manner as to be conveyed with that nature to all his seed. That the law and covenant are inseparably identified with each other, in God's dealings with man, the Scriptures everywhere testify. That covenant law, the apostle Paul declares to be written in the hearts of the Gentile world, inducing in them efforts after a legal righteousness and legal hopes. They "show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."—Rom. ii. 15. That the heathen world find in this unwritten law promises, as well as threatenings, that they hope to win God's favour on its terms, as well as thereby to escape from its curse,

§ 6. *The alternative doctrine.*



it would be idle for us to prove. It will scarcely be questioned. This law, engraven on man's nature, "as a covenant of works," is, by our Confession, made the foundation stone of the whole system of God's dispensations with man.\* That these things are so, is not, we believe, denied by any, who hold the doctrine of the covenant. That their relation to the whole question of Adam's representative office is most intimate and important, is manifest. And yet, without a reason, and apparently without a thought, they are left out of the account by the theory of constituted headship to which we here object.

Again, it is assumed as essential to this whole conception, that Adam's parental relation to his posterity was one of a purely serial nature. His was the first in a series of names; and, at the instant of his creation, prior to the conventional arrangement which is imagined, there was nothing in his nature and constitution implying more than this. In other words, the causative relation between him and his seed is either overlooked or denied. They were not in him, in any higher or different sense than the ward is in his guardian, or the constituent in the legislator. Hence, it is assumed that, but for the positive provision, his conduct would not have affected us at all; and that the actual effects are only such as are appropriate to a relation so constituted. His sin is not properly our sin, but only the ground of penal visitations upon us. His depravation is not common to us; but we are depraved by a process of mixed penal and sovereign dispensations, based upon our constructive relation to his sin. In short, to all the purposes of this theory, any other moral intelligence, however naturally unrelated to us, would have been as competent to be our federal head, as was Adam; and the consequences which flow to us would have been precisely the same, and would have resulted in the same way. So entirely is the natural relation of Adam to us, and the inscription of the covenant in our common nature, left out of the account.

In vindication of such views, it is denied that the law of generation, that like begets its like, is applicable to the propaga-

\* Confession, chap. xix. §§ 1, 2. See above, p. 287.

tion of sin, or, in fact, to the dissemination of accidental differences at all, or any thing but specific distinctions. But this is manifestly a mistake. The law of generation is as clearly marked, and its operation as firmly established and demonstrated, in the perpetuation of varieties as of species. Where was it ever known that the tractable greyhound, or the generous Newfoundland dog, was the offspring of the ferocious bloodhound, or the cur? Is there any ambiguity in the demarcation between the fleet barb of Arabia, the London dray-horse, and the Shetland pony? When did it happen that the child of Caucasian parents displayed the traits which are distinctive of the African or Indian tribes? Is there any thing indeterminate in the marks which distinguish the Celtic, the Saxon, and the Gallic races? Were the natural principle which these cases illustrate, to be violated in any well-defined instance, the fact would be as entirely unaccountable,—as utterly at variance with the recognised principles of propagation, as would be the perpetuation of a hybrid race. It is thus evident that, to a very wide extent, it is a characteristic of propagation in the whole animal kingdom, and, in fact, in the vegetable world also, that traits and features, which are accidental to a species, are often transmitted with a certainty as decided as that which perpetuates the species itself. Nor is this true of physical features merely; but,—even in the case of the lower animals,—of those which we may be permitted, by way of analogy, to designate as moral traits; as a moment's reflection upon the cases already cited will demonstrate. In truth, no fact is more familiar to observation, nor more clearly marked in the constitution of man, than the tendency to perpetuate the distinctive intellectual and moral characteristics of parents in their children. What is the meaning of this trait which was stamped on man's constitution by Him who does nothing in vain,—if its principal design and most important result was not the propagation of Adam's moral nature; whether confirmed in holiness, as the result might have been, or apostate and depraved, as is the lamentable case? Are not the phenomena in the inferior creation to which we have alluded, the perpetuation of particular family and race charac-





teristics, and the propagation of Adam's depraved nature, all particulars of one general law, that every creature brings forth after its kind? In fact, there seems to be a peculiar significance in the manner in which, in the first chapter of Genesis, as in the process of the creation we ascend the scale of being, we are at each step met by the reiterated announcement of this principle, established in every instance as the law of propagation. "The fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." "Every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind." "Cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth, after his kind." "And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply." If it be true, that the Scriptures are designed to teach, not natural science, but theology, we ask, what is the meaning of this reiterated statement of a fact, which stands so conspicuous on the whole face of living nature, that it certainly required no such means to make it known? Is it not designed to point to that signal feature in man's nature, upon which the entire Scriptures predicate all the importance of their revelations, both respecting the ruin and recovery of man? How significant, too, the terms in which the man, as yet alone, is blessed by his Maker:—"Be fruitful, and multiply;"—multiply, not by the production of others like him, merely, but by their multiplication from his person, —first verified by the separation of the woman from his side; and then by the propagation, from the substance of the twain, of the multitudes destined to people and subdue the earth.

To all this, when we add the fact, that the Scriptures emphatically point to the phenomenon of propagation, to account for the depravity of the human race, we are shut up to one conclusion. Of our ancestor Seth we are told, that "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image."—Gen. v. 3. The patriarchs, in the book of Job, are unanimous on the subject. (Job xiv. 1, 4; xv. 14; xxv. 4.) They declare man corrupt, because he is propagated from a corrupted source. To this David traces his crimes. (Psalm li. 5.) The same doctrine is attested by Christ. (John iii. 6.) And the apostle Paul asserts it in terms as emphatic. (1 Cor. xv. 48, 49.) The alternative is, to deny the

truth of all these statements, which might be indefinitely multiplied,—to deny, in other words, that "original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation,"\*—to admit our doctrine,—or, to take refuge in the assumption, that after Adam's creation, upon occasion of the positive agreement supposed, his nature was amended by the creative hand, so as to secure the propagation of depravity from him by generation, in case of his apostasy. Even then, the only possible refuge of this theory is in the Placæan doctrine of mediate imputation, or something else as inconsistent with the scriptural doctrine. Depravity has its foundation, beyond question, in the natural relation which subsists between us and Adam, as he was in covenant with God,—the testimonies of the Scriptures above cited being admitted. And,—whether the suggestion of a post-creative modification of Adam's nature be admitted, or depravity be allowed to flow to his seed by virtue of his original constitution,—yet depravity thence resulting must, both in the order of nature, and in fact, antedate any imputation of his sin, which may be supposed to result from a post-natural convention with Adam. This result is the more obvious, as, according to this theory, it is denied, that Adam's sin is imputed to us, as really ours, at all; but we are only liable to its punishment; and that, not fully, as by itself, but only as associated with our actual depravity and sins. Thus original sin, as sin, is reduced to native depravity alone.

But these are not the only difficulties which encumber the view here considered. It is a question which admits of no satisfactory answer,—how, by such an arrangement, Adam could, in fact, be constituted our representative. This question is usually met by reference to the customs of society, and the principles of representation, as practised in civil affairs. A single individual represents a county in the legislature, a state in congress, or, a nation at foreign courts. An attorney, or a commercial agent, represents an individual, a firm, or a larger company, by whom

§ 7. *Principle of representation.*

\* Larger Catechism, Qu. 26.





he is employed. The guardian, for many purposes, represents his ward. In many of these cases, it is said that the constituent or client is responsible for the acts of a representative whom he never appointed, and in whose action he was not a consenting party. Again, it is said that the will of the parties to a covenant determines the amplitude of its range;—that by positive agreement God chose Adam to act as the representative of the race, and Adam agreed to the choice; and that, upon the principles which govern covenants, the arrangement thus entered into binds the posterity of Adam. But, if this doctrine be correct, then may two petty chieftains in the heart of Africa enter into mutual covenants by which they shall severally undertake for and bind, in all coming time, Great Britain and the United States, in any such obligations as the self-constituted representatives may see fit to impose! And the whole transaction would be of binding force! So far, however, is such a principle from being countenanced by any example whatever, that in every instance usually cited in its support, the rule by which is determined the extent of the constituency represented, is,—not the will of the representative, with or without the concurrence of the opposite party,—but the number concurring in his appointment. So it is in the cases of political representation referred to. So it is in mercantile transactions. The agent acts for those, and those only, by whom he was commissioned.

All the cases usually cited, in illustration of the doctrine of representation, are reducible to two classes. In the first the representative derives his commission from those for whom he acts; and they define the extent of his authority in the premises. Such are the relations of the attorney to his client,—of the commercial agent to the houses by whom he is employed,—and of the ambassador to his sovereign. The second class differs from this, only by reason of the fact, that the apparent is not the real constituent. Thus, the guardian, although he is sometimes looked upon as the representative of his ward, is really the representative of the state, by whom he is appointed; and on whose behalf he exercises the functions of government and guardianship. So it is with the political representative. My

duty of obedience to the laws, is not because my personal representative concurred in their enactment; but because they were passed by a body exercising "the power" which God has bestowed upon the state. If the former were the principle, it would follow, that each individual would be absolved from obligation, in every case in which his representative had either been absent, or refused his consent to the enactment; and he who should decline to vote for any legislator would be free from all duty of obedience. The various institutions which pertain to the political and social organizations of society afford no example, from whence may be deduced the doctrine that it belongs to the parties to a covenant, to determine how many and whom they will represent. It is only the statement of a truism, to say that the parties to a covenant, when met, can act for none except those on whose behalf they hold commission. When, in the positive transaction which is supposed to have taken place, God and Adam met, the position of the Creator was, by supposition, that of a voluntary waiver of sovereignty, and assumption of the attitude and relations of a covenanting party. In consistency with the ground taken, nothing may be predicated of his actions, but what is in accordance with the attitude thus assumed. When Adam entered into the convention, either he already held commission to act on behalf of his posterity, or he did not. If he did, or even if he had a right to enter into a conventional agreement to act for them, that is to say that he was by nature their representative; for no higher exercise of vicarious authority can be imagined than that of appointing a representative for the race; and that, too, where the issues were of no less moment than eternal life and death. If Adam had not already commissioned, how did he acquire it?—Was it by an act of spontaneous assumption by him? or, by commission from the other party in the treaty?

Nor will it relieve the difficulties of the case, to appeal to the divine sovereignty,—to assert that God was competent, by the mere exercise of his pleasure, to make Adam our representative, although natively he was not so. We might show, that, by this supposition, the whole dispensation is presented in the light of



mere terrible majesty and power, clothed in the form of a covenant with Adam, but having toward him no grace, and being to his offspring no covenant. But it is unnecessary to enter into such an argument. The very supposition here suggested is in itself a contradiction in terms. It is denied that we were natively in Adam, as a covenant head; and asserted that, by a sovereign act, which exerted no direct influence, either creative or modifying,—an act simply decretive or judicial,—we were instated in him. And the challenge may, perhaps, be made, whether any one will deny the infinite power of God. The matter involved, however, is not one of either sovereignty or power, but of truth. The theory, under another name, is the very same which Edwards vindicates, in his doctrine of identity. It is,—that the divine power is such that it can “make truth;”—that, although we were not really one with Adam, and God did not modify in the least the real state of the case, intrinsically,—yet can he, and did he, make us one with him. Thus does this invention attribute to God the office of calling into being a spectre so flimsy, that the very parties who assert its existence, profess to see through it, and declare it false; and, at the same time, so powerful as to drag down the entire race of man in utter ruin. After all the influence of the sovereign power, which is supposed to have made us one with Adam, it is at last denied that we are any more really one with him than we were before. In fact, this theory constitutes the fundamental element in a system of feigned issues and fictitious constructions, attributed to God;—a system which may be appropriate to human tribunals, but will find no place at the bar of truth. He who supposes that God’s dealings with his creatures are, in any case or manner, controlled by relations, or imagined relations, not in accordance with the intrinsic state of the case, as it is, in every respect,—not only denies that the judgments of God are according to truth, but involves himself in the further conclusion that the Almighty is without a moral nature at all. For, to imagine that he can look upon one as guilty, in a matter in which he is not guilty, or liable to be punished as a sinner, when in fact he is not a sinner, is to assume, that holiness is no more in harmony

with God’s nature than sin,—truth no more pleasing to him than a lie.

But, notwithstanding all the difficulties thus presented, were the theory in question taught in the Scriptures, we should be bound to lay our hands on our mouths, and accept it with unquestioning faith, since we know that, however incomprehensible, or, to our dark understandings, seemingly contradictory, God’s word is “true from the beginning.”—Ps. cxix. 160. But the most fatal objection to the whole scheme occurs in the fact, that whilst the Scriptures seem, in the plainest terms, to teach a very different doctrine,—a headship real, native and effectual to all the ends involved,—there is not a passage which intimates the occurrence of such an investiture as is here supposed;—an investiture by positive post-creative agreement or decree. They testify, indeed, abundantly to the fact that God did enter into covenant with Adam; and that, in all the provisions, his seed were included in him. But, in proportion to the abundance of evidence on these points, is the significance of the fact, that, in it all, we fail to find a hint of such a positive provision, as is asserted to have taken place. We have neither record of Adam’s official appointment, nor of his acceptance of the trust.

In contrast with the entire silence of the Scriptures on this point, let the reader observe, the remarkable manner in which the Holy Spirit recurs, again and again, to the generative constitution of Adam. It is foreshadowed in the vegetation which carpeted and adorned the earth, (Gen. i. 11, 12,) and in the living creatures with which it was filled, (Gen. i. 22;) in regard to whom the record of a fact of this kind,—a fact which is patent on the face of nature, to the most casual observer; although elsewhere, so far as we know, unparalleled in the universe,—is entirely unaccountable; unless designed to bear upon the similar nature of man, and the great doctrines which are related to it. It is proclaimed of man, in the primary act of his creation. (Gen. i. 27, 28.) It is signalized by the temporary solitude of Adam, and the subsequent formation of his wife, “bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.” (Gen. ii. 18–24.) It is again re-announced as the fundamental fact, in the “Book





of the Generations of Man," (Gen. v. 1-3,)—the fact which lies at the basis of the whole dark history of our race, of which the fifth chapter of Genesis is the beginning. Is it possible, in the presence of these facts, to avoid the conclusion that the generative nature of Adam filled, in the mind of the Holy Spirit, a place in the doctrines of the Bible, proportioned to the emphasis thus given to it on the front of the record? All this, with the silence maintained respecting such a positive transaction as is supposed, seems plainly to imply, that, by virtue of the inscription of the covenant in his generative nature, Adam's posterity were, in him, parties to it. He was therefore dealt with by God, as in all things, natively and of course, the head and representative of the race; and this for the reason that his seed were really and in fact in him.

It may be well, before leaving the subject, to say a word as to the relations which Eve sustained to the covenant and the representation of the race. The covenant was made with Adam, in his creation; and consequently before Eve was formed out of his person. She was, therefore, comprehended originally in him. When she was taken out of his side, she was for herself at once a party to the covenant. But not only was she a distinct person, endowed with individual prerogatives and responsibilities; she was also bone of Adam's bone, and flesh of his flesh. Conjointly with him, she was the "Adam," of whom it had been said, "Let *them* have dominion" by multiplying and replenishing the earth. Neither Adam nor Eve separately represented the race; but both conjointly, as from both that race was to flow. This joint representation is evident, from the fact that each incurred peculiar elements of the curse, and that these have descended in their distinctive form to their seed. God recognised in Eve a representative position when he said to her, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee," as clearly and unequivocally as he did in Adam, when he pronounced upon him the corresponding curse. Paul certainly holds the woman to have been a representative head,

§ 8. *Eve part  
of the repre-  
sentative head.*

when he tells Timothy, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 12-14. The same conclusion is inevitably involved in the fact that Christ was promised distinctively as the woman's Seed, to destroy her enemy and redeem her children. The relation which the Redeemer sustained to the woman's sin is doubly signified:—in the primeval promise, and in his birth of a virgin mother. If he was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," the conclusion is unavoidable, that they who were under the curse of the law, were so as being responsible for the woman's sin, as well as for that into which she seduced her husband.

That this is the doctrine of the whole body of the confessions—as well as of the standard writers—of the Reformed church, is certain. Particularly is this unquestionable in respect to the doctrinal formularies of the Westminster Assembly, as a glance at them will demonstrate.\* How perfectly it corresponds with the view which we take as to the connection between Adam's parental and federal relations, and how incongruous to that of constructive headship which we have here examined, will be apparent to the reader. The doctrine is therefore repudiated by those who embrace the constructive system. Upon that theory, it is held that if Eve had sinned alone, she alone would have perished, and the race would have remained uninjured; whilst if Adam alone had sinned, she would have survived, but he and his seed had perished. But unless the whole idea of propagation is a mere dream, and the existence of a certain number and set of persons is supposed to have been so predestined as to be accomplished irrespective of instrumentality, it remains that the sin of either individual alone would have precluded the existence of our race; since it must have involved the separation of the pair,—as light can have no

\* Confession, ch. vi. Larger Catechism, Qu. 26. Brief Sum of Christian Doctrine, Head i. §§ 2, 3.



fellowship with darkness. The Creator might have realized the fancy of Eve as represented by the poet, when hesitating whether to make her husband participant in her fatal luxury:—

“To Adam in what sort  
Shall I appear? Shall I to him make known  
As yet my change, and give him to partake  
Full happiness with me? Or rather not,  
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power  
Without co-partner? So to add what wants  
In female sex, the more to draw his love,  
And render me more equal, and perhaps—  
A thing not undesirable—sometime  
Superior; for, inferior, who is free?  
This may be well; but what if God have seen,  
And death ensue? Then I shall be no more;  
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,  
Shall live, with her enjoying; I extinct.”—*PARADISE LOST*, Book ix.

But the offspring of “another Eve” had not been the present population of the earth. “In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam.”—Gen. v. 1, 2. The fall of Eve alone was not the apostasy of the race; nor would have been that of her husband. It was they both to whose charge was intrusted the jewel of man's integrity. Thus was a double barrier set around it, and the keys placed in two several hands, without whose joint concurrence the ruin could not be wrought.

## CHAPTER XI.

### EXTENT OF ADAM'S PARENTAL RELATION—ORIGIN OF THE SOUL.

“Quidam non melius posse expediri difficultatem [de propagatione peccati] arbitrati sunt, quam per animæ traducem, quam non pauci ex veteribus crediderunt, et ipse Augustinus non semel eo perpendere videtur. Neo dubium est quin hac ratione omnis sublata videretur difficultas.”—*TURBETINI INSTIT.* *Locus IX. QUÆST. xii. § 6.*

In the doctrine of the Reformed churches, respecting original sin, our relation to Adam, as the federal head of the race, is constantly based upon his causative relation to us. *§ 1. History of the doctrine.* His posterity were in him as their cause, and, therefore, contemplated as one with him in all God's dealings with him. But, although the Reformed authorities are unanimous on this point, some of those writers have incautiously assumed a position respecting the origin of the soul, which is irreconcilable with the doctrine thus set forth. The consequence has been, that the whole subject is obscured with subtleties borrowed from the scholastic philosophy, which have been the fruitful cause of error, and of apostasy from the scriptural doctrine of original sin. In what sense, and how far, we are the children of Adam, is a question which at first glance might seem to admit of but one answer. We venture to express the conviction that were the inquiry proposed to the great body of God's people, to those who have no other light than that of unperverted reason and the word of God, the unanimous reply would be, that the child is wholly the offspring of its parents,—that we are, in the entireness of our being, the children of Adam. And this we believe to be the teaching of the Scriptures, clearly and unequivocally expressed, and the testimony of sound philosophy



when intelligently examined. Yet human ingenuity has invented a number of theories on the subject, each involving an entirely different account of our relation to Adam's sin.

Plato supposed all human souls to have had a pre-existence, dwelling in some glorious and suitable mansion,—perhaps among the stars,—till, growing weary of heavenly and falling in love with earthly things, they were, by way of punishment, cast down to earth and imprisoned in bodies. A slight modification of this notion was espoused by Origen. "He set this theory of the pre-existence of souls in opposition to creationism, which supposed individual souls to arise from the immediate act of creation on the part of God; for this theory appeared to him irreconcilable with the love and justice of God, which maintains itself equally toward all his creatures,—and also in opposition to the traducianism of Tertullian, for his theory appeared to him too sensuous. Thus, as he, in order to be able to maintain his theory of a creation which preceded this temporal world, without prejudice to the church doctrine, appealed to the circumstance that the church doctrine defined nothing concerning that point, so also did he appeal to the same circumstance in regard to his own peculiar speculative theory of the origin of souls. In the doctrine, however, of a corruption and guilt that cleaved to human nature from the beginning, he might,—exactly as the North African church teachers express themselves,—he might speak of a mystery of the birth, according to which, every one who comes into the world needs purification, and he might quote, in favour of this view, the passages of the Bible which were quoted by others in favour of the doctrine of original sin. But he felt himself obliged to deduce this condition of human nature from another source,—namely, from the proper guilt of every individual fallen heavenly spirit, contracted in a former state of existence; and hence, according to the theory of Origen, this corruption could not be alike in all, but its degree would depend on the degree of the former guiltiness. Although he accounted Adam as an historical personage, yet he could be nothing else in his view than the first incarnate soul that sunk down from the heavenly state of existence; he must have looked upon the history of Paradise, like the Gnostics, as being symbolical,

so that it was to him the symbol of a higher spiritual world, and Adam was to him at the same time the type of all mankind, of all fallen souls."\*

This theory has lately had a transient notoriety, through the advocacy of Dr. Edward Beecher in the "Conflict of Ages." The few by whom the fancy has been embraced, have not pretended to derive any countenance for it from the word of God. Its adoption by Origen was merely one example of a tendency which prevailed among the Christian teachers of that age, to incorporate the philosophy of heathenism with the doctrines of the Bible,—a tendency which filled the church with malignant heresies. The revival in our own time of so absurd and effete a figment of pagan philosophy, constitutes avowedly the last resort in a desperate struggle to escape from the scriptural doctrine of original sin. We shall need no apology for leaving, without argument, a fancy which has not found a voice to second its resurrectionist of the present generation; and which is, upon its face, both irrational and unscriptural.

Another theory, which has some points of striking similarity with this, is, that all souls were created at the beginning of the world, together with the angels, and the soul of Adam; and that they are kept in an unconscious state, until the bodies are ready which they are destined to inhabit. Orthodox writers, who espouse this opinion, hold that the souls thus united to human bodies, are, at the instant of the union, as a penal consequence of Adam's sin, infected with moral corruption, and involved in the penalty of eternal death. This theory is thus stated by the late venerated Dr. Ashbel Green:—

"Nothing that I have seen on the subject [of the transmission of a corrupt nature from Adam]—and much has been written on it—has appeared to me so pertinent as the following remarks of Dr. Witherspoon; and I only regret that he has not given more expansion to the few important and judicious observations which I shall now repeat. He says, 'As to the transmission of original sin, the question is, to-be-sure, difficult; and we

\* Neander's Church History, Sec. V. § 3, Phila., 1843, p. 392.





ought to be reserved upon the subject. St. Augustine said, it was of more consequence to know how we are delivered from sin by Christ, than how we derive it from Adam. Yet we shall say a few words on this topic. It seems to be agreed by the greatest part, that the soul is not derived from our parents, by natural generation; and yet it seems not reasonable to suppose that the soul is created impure. Therefore it should follow, that a general corruption is communicated by the body; and that there is so close a union between the soul and body, that the impressions conveyed to us through the bodily organs, do tend to attach the affections of the soul to things earthly and sensible. If it should be said that the soul, on this supposition, must be united to the body as an act of punishment or severity; I would answer, that the soul is united to the body as an act of government, by which the Creator decreed that men should be propagated by way of natural generation. And many have supposed that the souls of all men that ever shall be, were created at the beginning of the world, and gradually came to the exercise of their powers as the bodies came into existence to which they belong.' Agreeing, as I do fully, with what is here stated, I shall do nothing more than enlarge a little on the ideas suggested in the quotation. . . . Although the Scripture does not tell us how the depravity of man is transmitted from parents to their offspring, it says enough, I apprehend, to show, that the soul is not derived from the parents, like the body,—that the soul is not created impure. . . . On the whole, if we must speculate and form a theory on this subject, the safest and most rational is to suppose that all souls were created at the beginning of the world; that they remain in a quiescent state, till the bodies which they are to inhabit are formed; that on union with these bodies, they receive all their original impressions, by means of the external senses; that the whole system of the bodily appetites and propensities, with the fancy or imagination, which is closely connected with them, having become irregular, excessive and perverted by the fall, do unavoidably corrupt the soul, and enslave it to sin. This appears to me a safe theory, and far more rational than either the system of the materialists, or that

which supposes the unceasing creation of souls. So far as it relates to the manner in which the soul is corrupted by the body, it seems to me to coincide with the numerous expressions of St. Paul—perhaps to be countenanced by those expressions—in which a carnal or fleshly mind is put for human depravity. By this apostle, the whole embodied principles of sin are emphatically denominated, the flesh:—'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.' For some reason or other, the flesh is here represented as the source and seat of sin."\*

This theory is essentially the same with that which Leibnitz propounds, in his *Theodicææ*, as a medium between the idea of successive creations of souls, and that of traduction:—"Quin immo medium quendam indicavi modum inter creationem omnimodam, et præexistentiam perfectam, arbitratus congrue dici posse quod anima præexistens in seminibus, ab initio non fuerit, nisi sensitiva; sed deinde ad superiorem rationis gradum elevata, postquam homo ille, cujus futura erat anima, conceptus fuisset, quodque corpus organicum,† huic animæ semper ab initio copulatum, post multas denique mutationes, determinatum fuerit ad formandum corpus humanum. Judicavi etiam hanc animæ sensitivæ elevationem (quæ ipsam promovet ad gradum essentialem magis sublimem, hoc est, ad rationem) extraordinariæ Dei operationi adscribi posse. Javerit tamen addere, quod mallet hominis perinde, atque aliorum animalium, generationem sine miraculo statuere: quod ipsum utcumque explicari poterit, si concipias, e magno illo animarum et animalium, vel saltem corporum organicorum, vitam habentium, et in seminibus latentium, numero solas animas, naturæ animæ destinatas, rationem involvere, suo tempore proditurum, et corpora organica sola esse præformata atque prædisposita ad suscipiendam aliquando formam humanam, dum interim animalcula, sive vivientia

\* Green's Lectures on the Catechism, Board of Pub., vol. i. p. 267.

† Leibnitz held all created spirits to be inseparably invested with subtle bodies, which he calls *corpora organica*. See his Correspondence with Clarke, p. 221.



seminalia, in quibus nihil ejusmodi præstabilitum est, a prioribus illis essentialiter discrepant, et in genere inferiore sunt constituta. Hæc productio *tradux* quidam erit; sed paullo tractabilior, quam qui vulgo ponitur, non animæ ex anima, sed animati ex animato, ac frequentia novæ creationis miracula evitans quibus anima noviter creata ac pura in corpus illam corrupturum, immitteretur.\*

Others, who hold the souls to be products of God's immediate creative power, suppose them to be made from time to time, when the bodies are ready to receive them.

Among those who deny immediate creation, some have supposed the soul of the child to be derived by subdivision and separation from that of the parent. Upon this view, the soul of each one of the human race was embodied in Adam, as part and parcel of his soul; and that, not seminally or potentially, but actually, and *in esse*. It would hence result, that Adam was literally the person of all men; and, each individual of the race being thus part of his person, his sins—not the first only, but all that he committed, prior to their several genesis from him—were the sins of his posterity, in the same sense in which they were his. Not only so; but, by parity of reasoning, each individual of the race, in addition, bears in like manner the responsibility and is implicated in the guilt of the sins committed by each and all of his ancestors, back to the first, the universal man.

Rejecting all these theories, as well as every other which attempts to explain the precise manner in which the phenomenon of propagation takes place,—whether by appeal to the illustration of *lux ex lumine*, or in whatever other way,—we take the position, that the entire man proceeds by generation from the parents. We do not say—we do not mean—that the soul is generated by the soul, or the body by the body. But man, in his "soul, body and spirit," is a unit, composed of diverse elements, yet having but one personality, in which the soul is the element of universal efficiency. Of that personality, efficient

\* Leibnitzii Tentamina Theodicosæ, Pars Tertia, § 397.

thus, it is that we predicate generation; and, according to the maxim that like begets like, we hold the child, in its entire nature, to be the offspring of the parents. The entire race of man was in our first parents, not individually and personally, but natively and seminally, as the plant is in the seed. When Adam was created, among the powers which constituted his nature, was that of generation. His substance was made to be an efficient cause, of which his posterity, taken in their whole being, physical and spiritual, are the normal and necessary effect. Thus, in Adam and Eve, the human race had not a potential existence, merely; but God, in creating the first pair, put into efficient operation the sufficient and entire cause of the existence of their seed. If we may so speak, theirs was not a nature *capable* merely of propagation, it was propagative;—by the very constitution of their being, as well as by the command and blessing of their Maker, they were destined to multiply and fill the earth.

This doctrine, of the generation of the entire man from the parents, has commanded the suffrages of many of the ablest and best of the orthodox divines, in every age of the church. Early promulgated by Tertullian and others of the fathers, and strongly countenanced by Augustine, it was espoused, at the Reformation, by the greater part of the Lutheran divines, and many of the Reformed. On the contrary, it has been denounced, with unanimous hostility, by Pelagians, Socinians, and every class of opposers of the doctrine of original sin.

In the present discussion, we shall first examine the principal objections which are usually urged. These being obviated, our readers will be prepared to attend without prejudice to the affirmative evidence which will then be presented. Two or three brief citations from opposing writers will exhibit, in unexceptionable form, the strength of the argument against our doctrine. Our first quotation is from Robert Baronius, an eminent metaphysician of the seventeenth century, Professor of Divinity in Marischal College, Aberdeen, Scotland:—

"Various arguments are urged, both by philosophers and





divines, to demonstrate souls to be created immediately by God, and not educed from the power of matter. The first is this:—If the soul is generable, it will be corruptible; but the latter is absurd; therefore also the former. The reason of the major is this:—That form\* which so depends upon matter, that it may be produced by the occurrence of a material cause, in generation, will thus also be so dependent on matter, that if it be separated from the matter which conferred and continued its existence, it of necessity must perish. . . . Philosophers and theologians, when they divide substances into eternal and perishable, do not mean any substance to be therefore eternal, because it is independent of God's sustaining power; but because they cannot be destroyed by any action of any creature. But, in this way, not only the angels and the heavens, but the rational soul, may be called incorruptible. Further, they who respond thus [that the soul is eternal merely by the conservation of God] cannot deny the human soul to be such that no physical or material action can destroy it; whence I infer it impossible to produce it by any physical or material action. For what is the reason that by no physical or material agency can it be destroyed? Is it not because it is a spiritual substance? But, for the same reason, it can be produced by no material power; and that, because it is repugnant to a spiritual nature to be produced by any material or physical action. But generation is a physical and material action, both because it occurs in matter, and because it is by a material force, to wit, the seminal power.

"The second reason against this sentiment is this:—It is the will of God that souls should subsist after death, separate from the body; but the spirits of the beasts to perish with the bodies.

\* "Aristotle, and the schools after him, called that a *form* which is the principle of action, and in which is involved that which is acted. This internal principle is substantial or primitive, which is called a *soul*, when it energizes an organic body; or accidental, which is called *quality*. The same philosopher gave the soul the generic name of *force*. A permanent and enduring force is nothing else than the *form*, whether substantial or accidental; a substantial form, the soul, for example, is altogether permanent, as I suppose; and an accidental form only remains for a time."—*Leibnitz Tent. Theod.* § 87.

Therefore he has given the rational soul a nature which is independent of physical matter, that by reason of its nature it may be able to exist separate from the material body. Whence I infer the soul, as to its nature, to be independent of the material body. . . . But if matter concurs to giving it existence, the soul as to its existence (*quoad suum esse*), must depend upon matter.

"Third. No active force can operate beyond its own genus. But the thinking soul surpasses the whole genus of physical nature, since it is a spiritual substance. Therefore no corporeal force can avail to the production of the soul. But every exertion of the seminal faculty is from a corporeal force. Therefore it is impossible that the thinking soul should be produced by that force; for thus an agent might produce an effect which in the scale of nature is far more excellent and perfect than itself."\*

Peter Molinaeus, in his work in defence of the Synod of Dort, presents the following array of arguments:—"Statuimus animam rationalem infundi in embryonem, non quidem *ὁμοθεῶς ἐκπαιεῖναι*, ut vult Aristoteles, l. 2, De Generatione Animalium, cap. 3. Sed putamus a Deo in ipso fœtu et humani corporis rudimento formari, ducti auctoritate Scripturæ. . . . Sed et Verbo Dei ratio ipsa suffragatur. 1. Anima enim quæ est aliquid supra naturam, non potest lege communi cum cæteris rebus naturalibus generari. 2. Nec quod est immateriale potest educi de potentia materiæ. 3. Ac omnino si anima non generaretur nisi per corpus, non posset existere extra corpus, nec per se sola subsistere. 4. Tum qui volunt animam traduci per semen sese cogunt in angustias, quibus impossibile est se expediant. Nam cur anima matris non traducetur quoque in filium? Aut si anima filii ab anima tam matris quam patris traducitur, necesse erit ut duæ animæ in unam coalescant et misceantur. 5. Quid autem fiet tot seminibus irritis? . . . An totidem animæ humanæ intercidunt, aut in utero suffocabantur? An solæ permanebunt extra materiam; cum certum sit eas ad numerum hominum non pertinere? 6. Tum necesse est vel totam animam patris traduci, et sic pater fiet exanimis; vel portionem animæ, et sic anima erit divisibilis.

\* Rob. Baronii *Metaphysica Generalis*, Cantab. 1685, p. 222.



7. Nec vero potest anima tota transmitti, veluti cum lumen accenditur de lumine; nam talis propagatio sit transmutatione admotæ materiæ; et sic materia admota animæ generanti in animam verteretur. 8. Quod si vera est definitio animæ ab Aristotele posita lib. 2. De Anima, c. 1, et passim recepta, quæ definit animam esse,—‘Primum actum corporis naturalis organici, vitam habentis in potentia,’—non video quomodo anima rationalis possit informare semen, in quo nulla sunt organa.”\*

Turretin says, “We prove the creation of souls:—1. By the law of creation;—2. By the testimony of Scripture;—3. By reason. From the law of creation, because our souls must have the same origin with Adam’s, not only since we must bear his image, 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48, but also because his creation, as of the first one of the species, is an example of the creation of all men; as the marriage of the first parents was an example to those that followed. But the soul of Adam was immediately created by God, when he breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, Gen. ii. 7, that it might be evident that his soul was not educed from the power of matter; but that it came extrinsically, through creation, and was infused into his body by the breath of God. Nor may it be objected, that the argument will not hold from Adam to us, since the same thing may be said respecting the origin of the body; which cannot be, since our bodies are generated, but Adam’s created of the dust of the ground:—for although there is a disparity with respect to the efficient cause, on account of the difference of the subjects, because, as the body is elementary and material, it may be produced by generation, but the soul, as being immaterial and simple, cannot arise otherwise than from the creative power of God,—yet in respect to the material cause, a comparison may rightly be made. For as the soul of Adam was created of nothing, so also the souls of his posterity; and as his body was formed from the dust of the ground, so also our bodies are formed from seed,

\* *Anatome Arminianismi; seu Eneucleatio Controversiarum quæ in Belgio agitantur. . . . Authore Petro Molinæo, pastor ecclesiæ Parisiensis, Lugduni Batavorum, cloloccxi. pp. 49, 50.*

which is earthly and material. Therefore, although the mode of action was peculiar in respect to Adam, the nature of the thing is the same in every case. The same is confirmed from the creation of Eve, whose origin as to her body is described from a rib of Adam, but of her soul there is no mention. Whence it may plainly be gathered, that the origin of Eve’s soul was not different from Adam’s, because otherwise Moses would not have failed to state it, since he undertook to describe the first origin of all things; and Adam himself would not have been ignorant of her origin, yea, would have proclaimed it. He would not only have said, ‘This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh,’ but also, ‘soul of my soul,’ Gen. ii. 23; which would have been more forcible for expressing the bond of marriage, which not only is over the body, but the soul. In fine, if Adam’s soul and ours are of different origin, they could not be classed in the same species, because the one would be from nothing, but the others out of pre-existent substance, evidently different.”\*

A recent writer presents the following objections to our doctrine:—“First. It is difficult to guard it from running into a view of the soul as material and corporeal, as compounded, divisible, and of course exposed to decay. Even the ingenious analogies of the ancient writers, such as that of ‘lux ex lumine,’ do not relieve the theory of this materialistic tendency. Second. There are many passages of Scripture which are careful to ascribe the creation of the soul immediately, and in a high sense, to God. The following may be consulted:—Num. xvi. 22; Ps. xxxiii. 15; Eccl. iii. 21, xii. 7; Isa. lvii. 16; and Zech. xii. 1. Third. The soul of Christ was evidently not thus derived, but was immediately created. Yet he is said to have been made in all points like us, sin excepted. At least, he should have the two parts of human nature substantially like ourselves. His body was formed supernaturally, indeed, yet still from the body of the woman; and, by parity of reason, we may infer the immediate creation of all human souls from the immediate creation of his. Fourth. The correlative doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Christ effectually

\* Turretin Inst., Loc. V., Quæst. xlii. § 8.





displaces this dogma of condemnation because of a physically generated, sinful soul. We are justified in Christ clearly upon the same principles by which we are condemned in Adam. But there is only a moral or spiritual connection between Christ and his seed; which renders it plain that, however a physical generation of the body may be the medium of transmission, the reason of the transmission is to be found in the moral relation of the race to the first man."\*

Of the arguments here set forth, the remark is obvious,—that they are largely made up of dicta of the scholastic philosophy, which assume the thing to be proved, are any thing but self-evident, and are incapable of demonstration. Such are the propositions, that whatever is generable is corruptible; that the soul is something above nature, and therefore incapable of generation by a natural power; and that every exertion of the generative faculty is from a merely physical force. In fact, Turretin, with calm unconsciousness, states as an unquestionable proposition, and an element of his argument, the very thing which he had set out to prove, that "the soul, as being immaterial and simple, cannot arise otherwise than from the creative power of God." But, passing by these points for the present, there are two propositions here assumed as true, each of which is demonstrably false, and each of which is fundamental to the whole argument and essential to the conclusion. These are,—that the phenomena of generation are so entirely within the reach of comprehension, that if we are unable to explain the mode in which a soul may be begotten, we by that confession of ignorance forfeit our cause; and,—that the process is purely physical. An air is assumed of intimate familiarity with the whole rationale of the matter;—a familiarity which is not only unattained, but unattainable. Take, by way of illustration, one of the simplest forms of propagation in physical nature,—the impregnation of the germ of a plant by the pollen. "The anthers consist of many minute cells, or compartments, formed by membranous partitions. At the proper season, the anthers burst longitu-

\* Southern Presbyterian Review, March, 1848, page 128.

dinally, and the little capsules or vessels called the pollen, are discharged in the form of yellow dust. A grain, or many grains, of the pollen, falling on the stigma, there bursts, in consequence of the moisture of dew or rain, and discharges its fluid contents. This fluid is then conveyed, by means of the absorbent vessels, or channels of the stigma and style, to the germen, or embryo seed-vessel, and thus, in an unknown and mysterious manner, renders the seeds fertile or prolific."\* Such is the utmost extent of our information on this subject, where we know the most. We can analyze the mechanism of the plant, and trace the appearances presented, at successive stages in the progress of the phenomenon; but how the several parts are prepared, how the fertile result is obtained, is a secret of which we know nothing. "If we ask, what is that force which is potential to development, to increase, to growth properly so called, we are led to the very edge of creation; the existence of cause is suggested, and we are made to feel that, though, as to the true nature of that, there is but a hair's breadth between us and perfect knowledge,—full revelation of the great mystery into which the mightiest intellects of earth have earnestly desired to penetrate,—yet we cannot, it is not in the nature of things that we ever should, pass over this narrow threshold and stand on the same platform with the Fountain of Life, where the light shineth, and where there are no shadows, no mysteries; for He knoweth all things. . . . 'The ablest endeavours,' says Owen, finely, 'to penetrate to the beginning of things, do but carry us, when most successful, a few steps nearer that beginning, and then leave us on the verge of a boundless ocean of the unknown truth, dividing the secondary or subordinate phenomena in the chain of causation from the First Great Cause.'"+ And yet

\* Comstock's Introduction to the Study of Botany, 1847, p. 65.

† North British Review, 1858, vol. xxviii. p. 180. The article quoted in the text contains some remarkable illustrations of the amazing and inscrutable phenomena of nature. We subjoin a single example on the subject of the parthenogenesis, or virgin propagation, of some species of insects. "It finds a striking illustration among the aphides, or plant-lice. The eggs are deposited in the leaf-axils, and in spring wingless six-footed larvae are developed from them. These again will produce a succession of broods without any connection with





writers, who cannot tell how it is that the solitary aphid can become the parent of its myriad offspring, nor how the bloom of the strawberry becomes pregnant with the luscious fruit, although the whole process is open to their most vigilant observation, will deny it to be possible that the soul is generated, because we cannot explain the mode of its occurrence!

But, whilst "MYSTERY" is thus inscribed upon the doors of nature's workshop, there is one thing which a moment's judicious observation conclusively establishes. It is this:—that the process is not, even in the vegetable world, one merely physical: it is not the mere composition and combination of material substances. The strawberry is something very different from a mere mixture of pollen and germen. Distinct from all the material elements which are involved, and controlling them all, there is a something which has none of the characteristics of matter,—a plastic force, which, sitting enshrined and invisible within, rules and controls the whole process, and is a cause *sine qua non*, without which no single step in the process would ever take place. Or perhaps we should rather say there are two forces here involved, one dwelling in the germen and its auxiliary organs, the other in the stamens. By these forces the several organs of the plant are prepared to take their distinctive part in the wonderful process; until, the time having come, the combination of the two constitutes a third force, by the agency of which the new plant is by degrees un-

the males. If the virgin progeny be kept apart, the parthenogenesis, or true virgin birth, will go on even to the eleventh generation. A provision is thus made for their multiplication to an extent scarcely credible. In Lecture XVIII. of the comparative anatomy of the invertebrata, Owen has made the following calculation of the rate of increase:—The aphid *lanigera* produces each year ten viviparous broods, and one which is oviparous; and each generation averages one hundred individuals.

1st generation,	1 aphid.	6th gen.	10,000,000,000
2d "	100	7th "	1,000,000,000,000
3d "	10,000	8th "	100,000,000,000,000
4th "	1,000,000	9th "	10,000,000,000,000,000
5th "	100,000,000	10th "	1,000,000,000,000,000,000

If the oviparous generation be added to this, you will have a thirty times greater result."

folded and built up. Instead, therefore, of its being unquestionably true that propagation is a purely physical phenomenon,—a subdivision and combination of material particles,—it would be much easier to sustain the proposition, that in no case is it predicable of mere matter. The corporeal elements seem to constitute the mere materials which the generative force seizes and shapes to its uses. So it is in the vegetable world, as we have here sufficiently seen. So it is in the animal tribes, among whom none will deny the entire animal to proceed from the parents, by generation. Yet, in them, thus propagated, there is not only the material body, but a spirit too; which is indeed perishable, but is as certainly immaterial. He who denies this must repudiate the scriptural definition of a spirit, and is reduced to the conclusion that the exercises of animal reason and reflection are phenomena of mere matter,—an admission which is near akin to the denial of the immateriality of the human soul. "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward," says the Preacher, "and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"—Eccl. iii. 21. Says our Saviour, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones."—Luke xxiv. 39. He, on the other hand, who admits that the spirit of the beast is immaterial, must at once acknowledge that generation is predicable of immaterial spirits. Generation does not, then, imply the subdivision of the parental spirits, nor the composition of that of the offspring.

But it will be said, that if our view does not lead to materialism, at least it robs the soul of immortality; for, says Baronius, "that which is generable is corruptible." By what process of reasoning will this be made to appear? Is it pretended that the Creator is not capable, by means of propagation, to begin an immortal existence in a creature? Or has he declared that he will not? It is true, that what is generable may possibly be corruptible. But, to fulfil the design of the dictum before us, it must be shown that it cannot be otherwise. And the assertion that it may be so, is no less true of whatever has a beginning at all, than of that in which the beginning is by generation. Necessary eternity is a prerogative of God, "who only hath immortality."—



1 Tim. vi. 16. It cannot be arrogated by any creature; and certainly no one will deny that the power of the Creator can confer enduring existence on any creature whatever. The term of existence of creatures is determined, not by any necessary law either of duration or dissolution, as essential in them, but by the will of the Creator; and is to be ascertained by the revelations of his word. Here we learn, that although the spirit of the beast perishes, that of man is, not of necessity, but by endowment, immortal; and there is nothing inconsistent with this recognised fact, in the supposition that his beginning is by generation. Baronius, indeed, objects to this view of the matter. He defines the immortality of the soul as consisting in the fact that it cannot be destroyed by any action of a creature, and demands whether the reason of this is not the fact that it is a spiritual substance. We answer, No; and point to the opposite facts,—that there is not a particle of matter in the universe which is not possessed of this same superiority over created agency, as to its destruction; and,—that the spirit of the beast is indirectly destructible by such finite power.

If these suggestions are not sufficient to show the utter fallacy of any attempt, by a process of *a priori* reasoning from the nature of a substance, as material or spiritual, to arrive at any certain conclusion as to its duration, we may point to the opposite fact of which the Scriptures assure us,—that the dead shall be raised and the living changed; so that the bodies of all shall become incorruptible and immortal. Thus, then, neither is that which is material necessarily corruptible, nor spirit necessarily immortal. The will of Him who gave them being fixes the bounds of each.

Here we would call attention to a principle, which is variously asserted as an element of the argument, although its true nature is perhaps not usually recognised. It is, that the souls of men must be products of immediate creative power, because it is impossible in the nature of things that they should be generated. Here, we remark, by the way, that no one can assign limits to the action of a cause, unless he understands the nature and operation of that cause; and therefore we, who must confess

our ignorance on these points in regard to generation, are entirely incompetent to decide that it is not possible that souls should be so produced. But we have another and still weightier objection to the assumption. Whilst it is immediately occupied with second causes, it in fact sets a limit to the power of God. In denying that it is possible that a soul should be generated, it in reality denies God to be able to produce souls in any way, except by the immediate exercise of his own power. In short, it is an example of the same kind of rationalism which denies it to be possible that God should rule the will of man, in consistency with its continued freedom; and that for the same reason,—because we cannot see how it can be done. But is the Almighty to be straitened by the imbecility of man's poor reason? "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

We are met with passages from the word of God. The Scriptures which are relied upon are the following. Num. xvi. 22, *§ 4. Scrip-* and xxvii. 16:—"The Lord, the God of the spirits of *tures alleged.* all flesh." Psalm xxxiii. 15:—"He fashioneth their hearts alike." Eccles. iii. 21:—"Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward?" Eccles. xii. 7:—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Isa. xlii. 5:—"Thus saith God the Lord, . . . he that giveth breath unto the people upon the earth, and spirit to them that walk therein." Isa. lvii. 16:—"The souls which I have made." Zech. xii. 1:—"The Lord which . . . formeth the spirit of man within him."

We appeal to the reader, whether these places prove any thing to the purpose; except a consciousness, on the part of those who use them, of the necessity of Scripture authority to sustain the foregone conclusions of their philosophy. But of the meaning of these texts, and their relation to the matter here at issue, we shall speak particularly after a little. There is only one additional scripture that is relied upon, as declaring the immediate creation of the soul. It is Hebrews xii. 9:—"We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of





spirits, and live?" This text is by Flavel and others regarded as conclusive. "Here God is called the Father of spirits, or souls, and that in an emphatical antithesis or contradistinction to our natural fathers, who are called fathers of our flesh, or bodies."\* By this interpretation, (*σάρξ*), the flesh, is supposed to mean our bodies, considered as physical organizations, contrasted with our souls. But this is a sense in which the word is never elsewhere used. The true meaning of the passage may probably be elicited by reference to the language of our Saviour to Nicodemus, in John iii. 6:—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If earthly fathers are entitled to reverence, from whom we have derived a nature depraved and fallen, much more is it due to Him who has restored us by his grace to holiness and given us the adoption of sons. This interpretation is undoubtedly far more conformable to the force of the original language and the analogy of Scripture than that which we reject. There are two insuperable objections to the admission of the latter. The one is, that, as already stated, it attributes to the word "flesh" a sense which is not only without precedent, but incompatible with its received meaning. The related uses of the words, flesh, and, body, appear in the climax of Eph. v. 30:—"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." In 1 Cor. xv. 50, we are told that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." And yet it is written, in the 44th verse, that "it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." In the scriptural use of the word, flesh, one or other of two leading ideas seems always to be involved. The first is that of animal integuments, considered irrespective of organization and life, or, to the negation of it. See Rev. xix. 18; Acts ii. 31; Eph. v. 29, 30. The second is the idea of human nature, ordinarily implying moral corruption. See Rom. viii. 3; Gal. v. 17; John i. 14; Heb. v. 7. Perhaps we ought to add to these another class of expressions, in which the idea conveyed by the word is that of relationship. This, however, involves both the preceding ideas,

\* Treatise on the Soul. Flavel's Works, folio, Glasgow, 1784, vol. i. p. 296.

—original community of corporeity and of nature. See Gen. ii. 23, 24; 2 Sam. v. 1; Rom. xi. 14.

Our other objection to the interpretation here considered is, that the word "our" is wanting in the text, in the latter member of the antithesis. Had the idea which occupied the apostle's mind been that of contrast between the origin of body and soul, he would not have failed to mark it by corresponding expressions. To the "fathers of *our* flesh," he would have opposed "the Father of *our* spirits." The adoption, instead of this, of the phrase "Father of spirits," is altogether inconsistent with the supposition, that the apostle designed a contrast between the origin of the body and the soul.

An interpretation, which seems to flow naturally from the language employed, is, of a comparison between fathers who are themselves but men, and the authors of a corrupted and fallen nature in their seed,—and a holy God, the great, the infinite Spirit; whose family is composed of those happy spirits, angelic and redeemed, who shine in holiness before his throne. "We have had fathers, themselves by nature carnal; and from whom we inherit a nature like theirs, corrupt and unholy. If we owe them reverence, how much more to God, the infinite Spirit, the Father,—the Creator, Preserver and Benefactor,—of the brotherhood of blessed spirits in heaven!" "The Father of spirits." With this compare Isaiah ix. 5. "His name shall be called, the everlasting Father, (*Heb.* the Father of ages)." "It signifies," says Alexander, "a father or possessor of eternity, i.e. an eternal being,—or, an author and bestower of eternal life. Possibly it may include both."\* So here,—"*the Father of spirits*,"—the infinite Spirit, the author of all others, irrespective of the mode of the relation. The contrast is not between the origin of body and soul, but between the dignity and authority of our natural fathers, and of the infinite Spirit, our Father in heaven.

There are two suggestions, which, duly considered, will obviate any difficulty which the texts above cited may be thought to interpose to our doctrine. The first is, that the question is not

\* Alexander on Isaiah, vol. i. p. 162.



whether God is the Creator; but whether in the creation of the soul his agency is immediate, and without the instrumentality of a second cause. Hence, quotations to prove God the soul's creator, are entirely aside of the mark. Yet such are the texts above cited. They do not even seem to have any bearing on the real question; unless we except that from the epistle to the Hebrews, of which we have particularly spoken. It is on all hands agreed, that the bodies of men derive their being through generation; and yet the Scriptures speak of the creative agency of God in this case, with a particularity and minuteness of detail, such as has no parallel in reference to the soul. One or two places will serve as an illustration of the language thus employed. Says the patriarch Job, "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again? Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews."—Job x. 8–11. Again, he says, in allusion to his servant, "Did not He that made me in the womb make him?"—Job xxxi. 15. Says the Psalmist, "Thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 13–16. It would be acknowledged preposterous to conclude, from these expressions, that the bodies of men are created immediately by God, without generation. Why, then, should such an interpretation be forced upon expressions in regard to the soul, which it cannot be pretended are more emphatic and unequivocal than these?

The second remark to be made on those scriptures, to which appeal is made, is, that it would be no way inconsistent with the doctrine of the generation of the whole man in Adam's poste-

riety, if the Scriptures should be found to speak in a different manner, of the origin of the soul and of the body. For, in the creation of the parents of our race, the body was moulded out of pre-existent dust; but the soul was created of nothing, by the Spirit of God. To this, undoubtedly, Elihu alludes, when he says, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty hath given him understanding." And again, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."—Job xxxii. 8; xxxiii. 4. Language on this subject, which is perfectly consistent with either view,—and such is the case with all the scriptures cited above,—should not be wrested, as though fatal to that which we take.

We proceed to the affirmative argument. Here, however, it should be observed, that ours is a gratuitous labour. The burden of proof properly rests upon those who deny the reality of the seeming operation of second causes, and assert the immediate and miraculous agency of God. So long as their position is not proved, the opposite holds good. That the human species is propagated by generation,—that children are the offspring of their parents,—is a proposition which, it would seem, might be taken for granted, if any thing may. It is asserted in the Scriptures; it is attested by all the analogies of nature; it is confirmed by all the phenomena of conception and birth; its reality is enstamped on the whole constitution of the child,—which displays hereditary traits, not only in the body, but in the soul; and not only those which are common to the race, but often, in a very distinct inscription, those which are peculiar to the immediate parents; and it is held in undoubting belief by the whole mass of mankind. In short, the proposition, that the child is the offspring of his parents, no one could venture to contradict in terms. And yet this is the very question which is at issue. For, be it observed, that the child is not merely a mass of beautifully moulded clay. It is not merely, nor principally, a body. On the contrary, the chief, the controlling, the essential, element in its being is its incorporeal, intellectual and moral nature. It is not the body only, but the soul, upon which the parental lineaments are en-

§ 5. Our argument gratuitous.





graven. It is not the body chiefly, but the soul, of which conditions and relations dependent on those of the parents are predicated. In short, in the unity of the human person, the soul is the principal, the controlling, element; and he who admits that the child is derived from the parent, and yet denies that the propagation comprehends the soul, "palters in a double sense," and denies in detail what he cannot venture to contradict in form. The two statements,—that man propagates his species; and,—that man propagates the bodies of his posterity,—are any thing but one and the same; and he who asserts that the latter only is true, in so doing denies the truth of the other.

In entering on the direct argument, our first appeal is to the express testimony of the word of God. It has already appeared,

§ 6. *Argument from Seth's case.*

that when God created Adam he made him in his own image and likeness;—a likeness not residing in the body merely, nor especially; but enstamped upon his nature in its generative constitution, and on his soul, in moral agency, knowledge, righteousness, holiness and dominion. The perfection of this likeness was defaced in the fall. In the fourth chapter of Genesis, we have a narrative of the birth and history of Cain and Abel, of the generations of Cain, and of the birth of Seth and his son Enos. Respecting Cain and Abel, we have no information, as bearing upon the present inquiry. Their blood does not now flow in any human veins; and the account respecting them is brief, and contains nothing specific in regard to a nature which is not any longer transmitted from them. But Seth is the father of the present population of the earth. In the manner of his origin, and the character of his nature, we have the original and pattern of our own; and, in regard to him, we have a statement, explicit, unambiguous, and apparently incapable of being explained away. The personal and family history of the individual, Adam, having been completed in the fourth chapter, the first book of the inspired record there closes; and the next chapter begins the second, which is headed by its distinctive theme. It is "The Book of the Generations," not of the individual Adam,—the first man; but of the generic Adam,—the race. This, the very first expressions of the record con-

clusively show. "THIS IS THE BOOK OF THE GENERATIONS OF ADAM. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him: male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name, Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth."—Gen. v. 1-3. Of this language, several things are noteworthy.

1. The statement is presented as prefatory to a narrative of the populating of the old world, and its universal corruption and overthrow. Of the violence and wickedness which brought the deluge upon the world, it exhibits the spring and source. It states the origin of the image, of which the subsequent chapters display the dark lineaments. Placed, too, as it is, as the first link at the head of the genealogical chain, which is traced, in the same chapter, to Noah, the second father of our race,—it indicates, not merely the manner of Seth's origin; but, in his instance, states the law which governs the whole, and is equally applicable to Enos, Cainan, and each several individual of his posterity, as well as to Seth.

2. The language under consideration signalizes, in a manner worthy of special note, the prolific constitution with which Adam was endowed, when created in holiness. When God had created man, he had in a very emphatic manner marked the distinction of the sexes, by the temporary solitude of Adam, and the after creation of his wife. "Male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Thus, at the very first, does the Creator mark propagation—and that without limitation as to any part of their being, but predicated of them in their entire nature, as they were "Adam"—as the means of their increase. A narrative is then given of the fall and the curse, and of the history of Cain and Abel, and the birth of Seth and Enos. Then the Spirit of God, about to exhibit the gliding and progressive stream of the world's moral history, in our ancestral line, recurs again to the original ordinance of propagation, as the key to all that follows:—"In the day that God created man,





... male and female created he them, and blessed them,"—with that blessing, of which the first element was fruitfulness, and the second, consequent possession of the whole earth. He then states the birth of Seth:—"Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." What means the earnestness with which, in a narrative so brief, the Spirit of God recurs again and again to the sexual relation, and the generative constitution of Adam? Can it be questioned, that, thus occurring at the very opening of the sacred record, and placed in immediate connection with the birth of our father Seth, it was designed to bear upon the doctrine of man's nature, and original sin,—that guilt and depravity which have their seat in the soul?

3. The specific design of the Bible, as set forth therein, is to unfold to us the nature and history of our relations to God. Beginning with the story of the creation of the world, and of man, in the image of God, and setting before us his high dignity and privilege, crowned with glory and honour, in dominion over the creatures, and in covenant with God,—it makes known the history of his base apostasy and grievous fall. It then announces the glorious plan of redemption, in the promise made to the woman. Of that plan, it is a history. To it, every page of the volume looks, gradually unfolding its hidden mystery, until it bursts upon the world in the triumphant catastrophe of Gethsemane and the cross; and then reveals, in prophetic vision, the story of its triumphs over sin and the curse; until the consummation of all things. At the beginning of such a history, in the very lowest course of the foundation of such a temple of God's glory, we find the statement in question respecting the birth of Seth. It is the very first fact recorded in "the book of the generations of Adam," that is, of man. Nor is there any room for the idea that the form of the expression is merely casual. A careful examination of the whole connection must produce upon the reader an impression directly the opposite of this. It has the characteristics of a deliberately designed and most significant statement, the obliteration of which would create a chasm in the field of revelation. It purports to exhibit

the bond which connects us with the transgression and ruin of our first parents. It states the fact to which all subsequent Scripture looks back as alone sufficient to account for the corruption and depravity of our race, and the curse which overshadows the world. The omission of this passage,—the elision of the fact here stated,—would leave the broad tide of the world's dark and lamentable experience entirely separated from the bitter fountain in our apostate parents. In other places the connection is presumed or asserted. Here we have its channel disclosed, and are permitted to see the outflow of the turbid stream. The fact of Seth's birth and family had been already stated in the preceding chapter. And, if the interpretation for which we here contend be rejected, we are shut up to the admission that here is an unmeaning repetition;—a tautology, the assumption of which has given occasion to rationalistic exegesis to assert, the whole to be a compilation, clumsily put together by Moses, out of several documents of older date.

4. In the place here considered, we are not left to vague and uncertain inference; but have a distinct and unequivocal statement as to the origin of the soul of Seth:—"Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." The begetting is in terms predicated of that in which was the image. If Adam's whole image, corporeal and spiritual, was reproduced in Seth, it follows that Seth, in his entire being, was begotten by Adam. This conclusion no ingenuity can evade. But the testimony is yet more explicit than this. It points with emphasis to the image of God in which Adam was created; and, with a mournful significance, contrasts that of Seth with it. "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;" "and Adam begat a son in his own likeness." No one will pretend that Adam's likeness to God was any thing short of a moral likeness dwelling in his soul. It is then Seth's moral likeness to Adam that is here especially meant; and, the begetting being expressly predicated of that in which the likeness lay, the conclusion is unavoidable, that, if Seth was begotten at all, his soul proceeded from his parents, as well as his body.

5. The passage, which we have here examined, is not only



thus important, as containing a statement so explicit, on the subject of our inquiry; but, occurring as it does in the first records of our race, inscribed by the Holy Spirit in intimate connection with the account of the fall,—and thus, in the minds of the inspired men who penned the subsequent scriptures, inseparably associated with that event, as the link of theirs and the world's connection with it,—it serves as a key to their writings;—a rule by which to interpret their several testimony, when in other places they speak on the same subject. To some of these we now turn.

Says Job, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one."—Job xiv. 4. The sentiment is repeated by Eliphaz, and re-affirmed by Bildad. "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?"—Job xv. 14. "How can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?"—Job xxv. 4. We are not unaware that these, and other passages which follow, are supposed to be susceptible of such interpretation as avoids the conclusion which we deduce. But it is the duty of the candid student of the word of God to inquire,—not how far the Bible may be forced to conform to the preconceived deductions of our philosophy,—but, what is the unconstrained significance of its language. We, therefore, bring these passages before the reader, and ask him to consider to what conclusion they obviously lead. These patriarchs, unanimously, and with the emphasis of the interrogatory form, assert the doctrine that like begets like. They predicate uncleanness and sin of man. That the soul is here implicated, no one will question. Of this defilement, it is further asserted, that it is consequent upon the fact of our origin from a defiled source. In other words, they declare the unholy child to derive,—not its defilement only, but that which is defiled,—its moral being,—from its apostate parents. The same remarks apply to the language of David:—"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm li. 5.

Similar in its meaning is the expression of our Saviour to Nicodemus:—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and

that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 6, 7. It is hardly necessary to say, that in this place the language, as the original shows, comprehends, not the birth merely, but the generation. Here occurs to us the remarkable argument which Dr. Green makes, from the scriptural usage of the word "flesh," of which our Saviour's language is an illustration. Speaking of the idea that the soul of each several individual, created originally without impurity, is defiled by the body, he says, "It seems to me to coincide with the numerous expressions of St. Paul—perhaps, to be countenanced by those expressions—in which a carnal or fleshly mind is put for human depravity. By this apostle, the whole embodied principles of sin are emphatically denominated, the flesh:—'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.'—Gal. v. 17. For some reason or other, 'the flesh' is here represented as the source and seat of sin." True; and the reason would seem to be abundantly clear, if the language of our Saviour to Nicodemus be taken into the account. He urges the necessity of the soul being renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit. This necessity he attributes to the fact that man's spiritual nature is depraved,—depraved by virtue of generation from a depraved source; and that it needs a work which shall be as radical in its influence over the nature, as this corrupted birth,—a new birth to holiness. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Now, in respect to this expression, observe:—1. That, as Dr. Green truly remarks of the language of Paul, so here, "the whole embodied principles of sin are emphatically denominated, 'the flesh.'" 2. That these principles are not substances, which can have an existence alone; but accidents of the soul, which can only therefore exist where their subject the soul exists. 3. That on account of this inseparable relation of the depravity to the soul, and of that and the body to each other, the whole man is in the Scriptures designated by this most conspicuous trait; and, in consequence of the fact that the depravity which is





hidden in the heart exhibits itself to creature observation mainly through the actions of the body, the whole takes its designation from the flesh in which it is thus discovered. 4. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19–21. Now, of these our Saviour expressly testifies that they originate, not in the body, but the soul. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."—Mark vii. 21–23. 5. That our Saviour here distinctly testifies that "the flesh" is a subject of generation;—it both begets and is begotten; and the offspring of this generation is depraved, because it springs from the depraved source, the likeness of which it bears. 6. That he predicates, of regeneration, a subject precisely commensurate with the depraved generation. It is that which is born of the flesh, which must be born of the Spirit; and it is because of this fleshly birth, that the other is requisite. Now, in view of these things, we ask, who will venture to come in with a philosophical apparatus and explain Christ's language away? Shall we be told that the soul was not begotten? Then it does not need a new birth. Shall we be persuaded that it is the depravity only that flows to us from our parentage? Then may the accident exist, without its subject,—depravity, without a depraved thing! Shall we be assured that it is the body to which the depravity attaches,—that it is primitive in it, and thence transfused into the soul, previously undefiled? Then must we believe our Saviour mistaken, in declaring that "all these" come out of the heart, and defile the man. In short, no ingenuity can subvert the fact, that our Saviour here declares, not only the depravity, but the subject of it, to proceed from a parental subject like itself.

Having thus glanced at a few passages, to which each one will be able, from his own reading of the Scriptures, to add many

others, we ask,—Are the interpretations here given, in accordance with the grammatical structure—the plain and literal meaning—of the language used by the Holy Spirit? And if this question must be answered in the affirmative, we further inquire,—What sufficient reasons can be given for setting aside the sense so ascertained, and adopting another? So far as appears, the only reason assigned, consists in the supposed philosophical necessity of repudiating the conclusion to which we are thus inevitably brought. But we have already seen, that this supposed necessity does not exist,—that sound philosophy does not utter such testimony as is attributed to it.

Further, whilst philosophy is entitled to a most respectful hearing, in its own appropriate sphere, on the other hand, when the Spirit of God makes to us communications involving radical questions concerning the whole relation of man to God, and to the salvation of Christ, it is the business of philosophy to be silent; and the statements are to be interpreted solely by the assistance of their Author, speaking in other scriptures. The declarations of the Bible are indeed to be explained and understood in accordance with the established laws of language; but the meaning thus ascertained may not be set aside, or modified, out of respect to any other than a scriptural authority,—the result of an impartial and reverent comparison of spiritual things with spiritual, in accordance with the analogy of faith. This is especially true where the statements in question, as in the present case, involve important theological issues. It will not be pretended that the analogy of the system of truth is in any thing at variance with the position maintained in the present argument. On the contrary, we trust to make it abundantly evident, before we close, that all the analogy of the doctrines of the Bible tends directly to our position.

We are deeply solicitous, in reference to the views here presented, as to the relation of philosophy to the interpretation of the Scriptures on this subject, because of our deliberate and earnest conviction that here, and here only, can a stand be made, consistently and with complete success, against the assaults of

§ 8. Proper  
place of phi-  
losophy.



Pelagian heresy. If orthodox theologians unite with Pelagians in explaining away the teachings of the Scriptures on the origin of the soul, in deference to the dicta of an intrusive philosophy, it is impossible that they should successfully contest the right of their more venturesome associates to apply the same key to the solution of the difficulties which surround the question of its nature; especially as those difficulties arise principally from the departure already allowed from the testimony of the Scriptures on the former point. No argument can be constructed which will vindicate the one, and not at the same time justify the other. The doctrine of the primary, absolute and final authority of the Scriptures,—and that is the question at issue,—is the citadel of the Reformed, the Christian faith. To deviate from it, in the most insignificant matter, whether through inadvertence or design, is to surrender the fortress; and thenceforth there is no available check upon the incursions of error. There is no barrier but this where it can effectually be said to the subtleties of human wit and the pretensions of carnal philosophy, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther.” Wiggers, the historian of the Pelagian controversy, himself not unfavourable to the doctrines of Pelagius, makes the following just and instructive statement in respect to the manner in which the controversy was conducted by the Pelagians and their great antagonist, the illustrious Augustine:—“Both Augustine and the Pelagians rested the truth of their opinions on reason and Scripture; but in a totally reverse order. What Augustine thought he had found in the Bible, he also sought to defend with philosophic weapons. The Pelagians sought confirmation from the Bible for the opinions they had derived from reason, and reflection on the moral nature of man. The former was a super-rationalist; the latter, rationalists. Julian, in several passages, declares the principle of his rationalistic interpretation of the Bible:—‘Scripture can teach nothing against the plain decisions of reason.’ Aug. Op. Imp. ii. 53, iv. 136, vi. 41.”\* Such has been the order of the controversy from the beginning, wherever it has been conducted successfully with this proud and rationalistic heresy. “Credo,

\* Wiggers's Augustinism and Pelagianism. Andover, p. 878.

ut intelligam,” “Faith before reason,” is the watchword of victory in this controversy. He who fights under this banner will come off triumphant. He who forgets or inverts it will inevitably fall.

There are objections which appear insurmountable against the doctrine that the soul is an immediate creation. First.

§ 9. *Dualism of the creation theory.* It introduces a gross and revolting dualism into man's nature. As originally made, Adam comprehended in one being the two distinct elements of

body and soul, joined together in a union which was essential to their normal condition and to the happiness of man,—a union which nothing but the penal curse could have dissolved. In the unity of these elements, there subsisted a common identity, a common consciousness, common moral relations, and a common moral character. And it is a fact which is not without significance, that in the narrative of his creation there is no intimation of an extraneous creation of the soul and its subsequent insertion in the body. “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man was a living soul.” We behold the dust moulded into form and symmetry, but breathless and lifeless. We look again, and the inanimate clay is warm with vital heat; the breath of life fills the lungs; the light of intelligence beams from the eye; and an immortal spirit dwells within. Thus, although diverse elements enter into his being, there is nothing to suggest or countenance any conception at variance with the most perfect and inseparable unity. We read nothing to sustain the assertion of Turretine, that Adam's soul “came extrinsically through creation, and was infused into his body by the breath of God.” It was not his soul, but his breath, which was breathed into his nostrils; and of any extrinsic creation of the soul, and its subsequent infusion into the body, we have no intimation. In fact, there is no distinct mention of the creation of the soul at all; but the whole style of the narrative seems to imply that it was created within the body, in an original, perfect and inseparable identification with it.





But, on the contrary, by the doctrine which we here oppose, we are introduced to man, as comprehending in his person two distinct and separate individuals,—two several beings. They are described as independent in the sources and even in the time of their origin,—as possessing, severally, complete constitutions, prior to, and irrespective of, their connection with each other,—as having originally distinct and contrasted moral characters,—as bound to each other by a relation, not essential and *ab origine*, but accidental and secondary, by virtue of a factitious and mechanical union; and, when thus brought together, acting as distinct individuals upon each other, as extraneous and antagonistic influences; so that, in the process, the soul, hitherto uncorrupted, is defiled and enslaved in sin, in consequence of its connection with the body, which derives and conveys to it corruption of nature from our apostate parents.

It results from these views that Adam's soul and body were not inseparably united,—that is to say, he was not created immortal; and that the separation which takes place at death, so far from being a penal condition, an unhappy effect of the curse against sin, should rather be regarded as a desirable estate,—the restoration of the soul to its native and normal condition;—and that the soul, so far from anticipating the resurrection with desire and joy, should rather recoil from it, as from the resumption of broken and cast-off fetters. In fact, this theory robs the doctrine of the resurrection of much of its glorious significance,—implying, as does that doctrine, a sustained identity between soul and body, even in the grave;—and the language of our Confession on that subject becomes mere unmeaning sound. According to it, the souls of believers are with and united to Christ, and the bodies, though in their graves, participate in that union. "The communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death, is in that their souls are then made perfect in holiness, and received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies, which even in death continue

united to Christ, and rest in their graves as in their beds, till at the last day they be again united to their souls."\*

It is a very serious objection to the doctrine which we here oppose, that it entirely obliterates the relation of brotherhood ‡ 10. *Christ's* to us which the Lord Jesus Christ has condescended *humanity*. to assume, by becoming a son of Abraham and seed of the woman. That the Scriptures emphasize this relation as a real one, no one will question. It is dwelt upon for our encouragement in coming to a Saviour who has a sympathy for us by virtue of his kinhood to us, and consequent sense of our infirmities, and experience of our temptations; and it is spoken of as essential to qualify him to become our surety and saviour. The scriptures which speak on this subject—and the same remark will apply to all to which we have appealed in this discussion—address themselves to the common people; and, in language adapted to their understandings, speak in a manner which could not but produce in their minds the conviction that the relation was a real one, resulting from a true generation of the entire human nature from our first parents. On this subject the angel says to the Virgin, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee,"—Luke i. 35; and the assurance given to Joseph was, that "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."—Matt. i. 20. Here is a miraculous but proper and real generation of a true humanity, springing thus from the common fountain of the human race, and comprehending in it "a true body and a reasonable soul; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance;" "so that two whole, perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person."† According to the view which we oppose, instead of a body and soul begotten of the substance of the Virgin, his was an immediately created soul, having really no other relation to ours than that it was endowed with similar capacities and

\* Larger Catechism, Question 87.

† Larger Catechism, Question 89; and Confession, viii. 2.





attributes, sin excepted; but, as to its origin, as distinct and unrelated to us as are the angels in heaven; and the only relation of kindred which he bears to our race consists in his occupying a body made of dust like ours, and sustaining some kind of a vegetative relation to the bodies of the first parents of our race. It is true that, in the same way, it dissolves all the mutual relations of kinhood among men; as their souls, severally, are supposed to be distinct and independent creations. But, certainly, this is no redeeming fact; nor does it relieve the theory of its obnoxious bearing upon our common relation to the Son of God.

The writer in the Southern Presbyterian Review, as quoted above, appeals indeed to this same characteristic of his theory, as conclusive in its favour. He assumes it to be unquestionable, that the soul of Christ was immediately created, and hence concludes that ours must be so. Were the premise admitted, the conclusion does not follow. The miraculous conception takes the case out of the category of ordinary generation; and precludes any such argument, from the manner of it, to other cases. But the writer referred to gives no argument and no scripture, to support his assumption; and we are persuaded that there is none to be found. Reason suggests none to us; and revelation is entirely silent as to a creation of the soul of the Son of God. On the contrary, as if expressly to put to confusion such a suggestion, it emphasizes the divine efficiency in reference to his body:—"A body hast thou prepared me." Were such language employed in regard to his soul, with what promptitude would it be used in the present argument! And yet, even the body was begotten. How, we do not know. Nor are we wiser in any other case. The curious argument of Augustine may have been present to the mind of the writer in the Review:—"If the fact avails to show the pre-eminence of the priesthood of Christ over that of Levi, that Christ as priest was prefigured by him who received tithes of Abraham, and of Levi in him, it is evident that Christ did not pay tithes in Abraham. But if Levi therefore paid tithes because he was in the loins of Abraham, it follows that Christ did not pay

tithes, as not being in Abraham's loins. But if we admit Levi to have been in Abraham merely as to his body, and not as to his soul, then Christ also was in him; because according to the flesh he was of the seed of Abraham, and he, also, upon this supposition, paid tithes. What then becomes of his pre-eminence over Levi, on account of Levi being tithed by Melchizedek, in the loins of Abraham,—when Christ was in him too, and, hence, equally paid tithes; unless we suppose that in some way Christ was not in him? But who doubts this as to his flesh? Therefore he was not in him as to his soul. Further, the soul of Christ was not generated; otherwise it would also have been present in Adam in his apostasy."\*

Were we to admit the soundness of this reasoning, the conclusion would remain, that the souls of all except Christ proceed from propagation. We cannot, however, make use of the argument; because evidently fallacious. The apostle is comparing the priesthoods of Aaron and Christ. In the interview between Abraham and Melchizedek, he regards the former as the father and representative of Levi, whose priesthood was, in fact, an inheritance derived from Abraham. Melchizedek was the type and representative of Christ, whose filial relation to Abraham was altogether secondary to that which, "by the power of an endless life," under the oath of God, he sustained to Melchizedek. Thus, when Levi paid tithes in Abraham, he did not so much pay them to Melchizedek, as, to Christ, the priest for whom in the transaction Melchizedek stood. The apostle, therefore, purposely holds the natural relation of Christ to Abraham in abeyance, in view of the paramount importance of his unchangeable priesthood, which he contrasts with the changing priesthood of Levi. No sound conclusions can, therefore, be derived from Augustine's reasoning, which is so entirely incongruous to the scope and design of the apostle. We might add, that, addressed as was the argument of Paul to the children of Abraham, it is further conclusive to them, as their lineage was traced in the public genealogies, in the line of the father; and, since

\* Augustinus de Genesi ad Lit., xii. 19.



Christ was without a human father, he was not thus technically reckoned a son of Abraham. See Heb. vii. 3.

The suggestion of Augustine, in relation of the soul of Christ being in Adam in his apostasy, we will have occasion to notice when we come to consider his mediatorial work. We may, however, remark, that the opinion to which we oppose ourselves, would deprive the doctrine of the miraculous conception of all its significance. An occurrence to which the Scriptures, historical and prophetic, point with the finger of awe, as to one of the great mysteries of revelation, is then reduced to the trivial fact that his body was begotten out of the ordinary course of nature.

The creation doctrine is exceptionable in subordinating the divine agency to the control of second causes. It must be admitted, that wherever the second cause is present, generation will take place. The conclusion is, that the creative power of the Almighty must wait in attendance on these finite agencies, to provide souls for the bodies thus produced. It does not obviate this objection to say that the whole matter is subject to the providential ordering and control of God. For however he may be recognised as providentially supreme, yet is his creative omnipotence placed in an attitude of inferiority. In the order of operation, it is supposed to follow and wait upon the action of the finite causes of generation.

Again, this theory, by introducing miracles as an ordinary element in the common course of things, and placing them in undistinguishable combination with natural effects, destroys wholly the significance of miraculous occurrences; and thus sweeps away all means of information as to the existence of God and of communication with him. A miracle is an occurrence which it is beyond the power of natural causes to produce. Its importance in theology consists in the fact that it constitutes the only conceivable means of opening up intelligent communication between us and God. In fact, whatever the form in which the evidences of revelation may be stated, they, in the last stage of the argument, appeal to miracles as the conclusive fact in the case. In a miracle we have convincing proof of the presence of a power

that is superior to nature; that is to say, it is infinite. The nature of the miracles, and their relations to natural events and rational communications, indicate that Power to be a moral Intelligence. It is assumed as a self-evident proposition, that the works of any agent will be such as to correspond with the characteristics of his nature;—that as he is, so will he act. Hence the conclusion is deduced that the divine agency will not be exerted except in a way correspondent with the nature of God; and therefore that the interposition of his immediate hand, in concurrence and co-operation with the agency of an intelligent creature, is the pledge and seal of his approval of that agency. Thus, when Moses smote the Red Sea, and the waters of it divided and stood up as a wall on the one hand and the other, this exertion of almighty power evinced God's approval of the act of Moses and of his expectation thus to cross the Red Sea. Our Saviour habitually appealed to this principle, in proof of his commission from the Father. "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him."—John x. 25, 37, 38. Again, he says, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin."—John xv. 24. Here the principle is assumed as fundamental and unquestionable, that the miraculous co-operation of infinite power, in immediate connection with human agency, is conclusive evidence of God's approval and sanction to that agency. But this principle cannot be true, if it be a fact that souls are immediate creations; unless we are prepared to abandon all moral distinctions as to the sexual relations, and admit that every instance of fruitful intercourse has the distinct and miraculous seal of God's approval. This fatal objection is applicable to every form of the creation theory. If it be maintained that all souls were created at the beginning, and that they are from time to time inserted in the bodies,—this latter act calls for as signal an exertion of God's own immediate power as would the incarnation of an angel. The other alternative,—that the souls are created from





time to time as the bodies become ready to receive them,—is *ex professo* the introduction of a miraculous occurrence.

The only way that we can conceive in which the attempt may be made to evade this conclusion, is by the assumption that there are two classes of miracles,—the one conveying the assurance of God's sanction to the agency with which the miracle is identified; the other serving to supplement the inadequacy of second causes. But such a distinction must be purely arbitrary. In all instances of miracles, the essential characteristics are the same. They all consist in effects to which the operation of second causes is inadequate. And if in any case it may be assumed that the supernatural power is put forth in concurrence with agencies and actions which have not the approval of the infinite One, the result is, to leave us utterly without any means of knowing what he does approve. If the immediate power of God may be implicated in concurrence with an act of human licentiousness, it will be utterly impossible to prove that it may not be implicated in a similar way in connection with falsehood or imposture. If it be said, that a previous declaration that God's power is about to be interposed, is essential to the evidence involved in a miracle; and that the design of the interposition is to testify his endorsement of the human instrumentality,—it will not relieve the case; for, in the first place, such announcement was not always made in connection with the miracles recorded in the Scriptures. As an illustration of a large class, let the reader take the occurrence recorded in John xii. 28, 30. Jesus said, "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again: . . . Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes." In the second place, if this assumption be true, it will follow that it would be impossible for an impostor to beget children; should he announce that as the proof of his possessing divine authority.

Allusion has already been made to the argument deducible  
 § 12. Cause from the transmission of intellectual and moral  
 and effect. traits from parents to their children. This consideration is entitled to much greater weight than, at first glance,

the reader may be disposed to imagine. God, in forming the creation, not only instituted the relation of cause and effect, but enstamped upon the creatures such constitutions that the effect always bears traces of the cause; by means of which we may determine that a given effect is the proof of the operation of a specific cause. Thus, when we find the beams of light daily irradiating our world, and observe the various phenomena which occur in connection with this daily illumination, we unhesitatingly conclude the existence of a vast luminary at the centre of the solar system. When a man plunges his knife into the heart of another, the whole character of the act is dependent,—not merely upon the reality of the law of cause and effect,—but upon the antecedent assurance that the wound and death which follow are effects of the act and decisive proofs of its occurrence. When the Psalmist asserts that the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork,—and when the apostle testifies that the heathen world is inexcusable in failing to recognise the God thus revealed,—they both go upon the assumption, that the inscriptions which we thus read in the book of nature are records of unquestionable truth. In fact, as we need not here pause to show, all the proof that we have of the existence of God or of any thing else, is dependent upon the entire reliability of these inscriptions in nature, which, in the various effects there perceived, announce the operation of definite and proportionate causes. The operation of this principle we trace with unerring certainty, and recognise without hesitation, in the bodies of men. If we meet with a person in whom we recognise the form and features, the colour and hair, and all the physical characteristics, of the African tribes; we do not hesitate to conclude that he is the offspring of African parents; and upon this conclusion we should rest and act with the most implicit confidence. And this confidence is based upon our belief that the physical traits which we thus recognise, are inscriptions by the finger of God, certifying that the person derives his being from a source like himself.

If this argument is valid in respect to the body, its value can be no less as applied to the soul. We shall not pause a moment,



to prove that the intellectual and moral peculiarities of parents are clearly traceable in their children. It is a fact attested by universal experience, and acknowledged by universal consent. Our conclusion is, that the soul of the child, thus clearly marked with the parental lineaments, derives its origin from the parents of whom it is a copy. It is true, as it may be argued, that God could inscribe this likeness, in creating the soul. But the question is not, whether his power is equal to this; but, whether it is consistent with his truth and wisdom, to inscribe a falsehood on the nature of the child;—a falsehood which renders the proof of his own existence impossible, and utterly confounds all the relations of the creatures to each other and to him. For, if the parental lineaments on the soul of the child are no proof of a causative relation between the parents and that soul, it must be upon the ground that the indications of cause which nature contains are not reliable; and, if this be true, their indications of the existence of God may be false. If we should find, at the depth of fifty feet beneath the surface of the ground, a tree, with roots, stock and branches, and every characteristic to correspond with those which stand in the surrounding forests, we would feel that he was trifling, who should insist that it was made and placed in its position at the first by the finger of God. We should ask, "Why did God enstamp on my nature that intuitive recognition of the relation of cause and effect, by which I am impelled unavoidably, in the presence of these facts, to recognise the operation of certain second causes? As he is Truth, these facts testify to me the truth; and demand the recognition of proportionate and corresponding second causes in this instance."

So, in the case of the soul;—God has given man a generative nature, in common with the whole vegetable and animal world. Everywhere the law is, that like begets like. Man is an intellectual moral agent,—a sinner. His Maker says to him, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." His children are born in his image, in body and soul;—like him in a depravity which is predicable of nothing but the soul. Upon the whole case thus exhibited, God's own word utters the demand, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Yet, with

all this, we are asked to believe that nothing but the body proceeds from the parents,—that the soul comes from the hand of Him, all whose works are very good! Is it possible to reconcile this with the integrity and steadfastness of the testimonies of nature, which declare the existence of God himself? If nature be chargeable with deception in the one case, how can we safely trust her in the other?

Opponents appeal to the doctrine of justification, and the parallel between it and that of original sin. But, in fact, here lies the strength of our argument. We have already seen the parallel run; and the argument will unfold itself more fully when we come to speak of the person and work of Christ.

The reviewer above quoted, in opposition to the doctrine here espoused, urges that "the reader should suspect its soundness,

§ 13. Difficulty  
on original  
sin. from the ease with which it professes to brush away all the perplexities of a really difficult subject,"—that of the propagation of depravity. We have

not adopted our opinion on this subject, on account of the relief which it affords from the greatest difficulties which encumber the doctrine of original sin; but, because we think it is taught in the word of God. We submit it, however, to the judgment of the reader, whether a theory, the only apology for which is that it avoids certain fancied philosophical difficulties, is to be therefore adopted, because it originates still greater ones, on a fundamental topic of theology;—difficulties which are constantly developing Pelagian tendencies in the church of God. The embarrassment arising from this cause, has been continually realized, from the time of Augustine; and has given abundant exercise to metaphysical ingenuity, in the vain attempt to reconcile the contradictions which occur between the creation theory and the scriptural doctrine of original sin.

Says an old writer, "Augustine could not solve all those difficulties which the Pelagians raised against original sin, unless he held the tradition of the soul. He could not perceive how the candle should be so soyl'd, if it were lighted only by a pure sun-beam fetcht from heaven. Yet that knot, which so skilful and laborious a hand could not untie, some others have easily cut





asunder; and, indeed, there is no such cogency and prevalence in that argument as can justly promise itself the victory. For the schoolmen, that are strong asserters of the soul's creation, do satisfy all such doubts as these.\* The sophistries of the Pelagianizing schoolmen of the church of Rome have constituted the common resource of all those writers who have espoused the creation theory. It is not, therefore, surprising that the doctrine thus constructed should prove irreconcilable with the Scriptures on the subject. In respect to the propagation of original sin, orthodox divines are unanimous in declaring that, "in general terms, it is through a defiled generation, by which those who are corrupt and sinners are born of corrupt and sinful parents. For, as a man begets a man, and a leper a leper, it is not wonderful if a sinner beget a child a sinner like himself. This, both nature, and the condition of all propagating animals, show. They all beget offspring like themselves in species, both as to the substance and accidents of species; and the law of propagation, established by God as well before as after the fall, (Gen. ix. 1,) demands it. As therefore before the fall God willed the upright nature to be propagated; so, after the fall, the nature corrupted."† Of the whole doctrine of original sin we shall treat in the next chapters. At present, it is enough for our argument, that among the Reformed churches there is no question, as to the fact that we sinned in our first parents, and fell with them in their first transgression; and that we derive from them, by ordinary generation, both the guilt of the apostasy, and depravity of nature. We have only space to glance at the argument which grows out of the fact, that whilst the view which we hold as to the origin of the soul is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of the Scriptures on original sin, and exhibits that doctrine—our opponents themselves being judges—uncumbered with any serious embarrassment;—on the other hand, their own theory is encompassed with difficulties, which are entirely insurmountable, by their own confession,—still more at the

\* Culverwell on the Light of Nature, 1652, p. 91.

† Turretin., Locus IX. Qu. xii. 2.

bar of impartial judgment. Of them, Turretin says, that "some have supposed there was no better way of removing them, than by the generation of the soul; which not a few of the ancients believed; and Augustine himself appeared more than once to lean that way. Nor is there any question but that, upon this theory, every difficulty seems to be removed. But, because, as we have already shown, that opinion corresponds neither with Scripture nor sound reason, and is exposed to many objections, we cannot accede to it."\*

But, on the other hand, after a laborious attempt to meet and master the objections which present themselves to his own theory, he closes by the protestation, that "although every difficulty which occurs to this way of explaining the propagation of original sin, should not seem to be removed, the reality of that propagation, which is so plainly asserted in Scripture, and confirmed by experience, is to be none the less firmly held; nor, if we are unable to trace the manner of it, are we therefore to deny or doubt the fact. Here, it is sufficient, with Augustine, to recognise that the manner of it, whatever it be, is just; and to acknowledge that it is incomprehensible."† Equally strong is the testimony of Pictet:—"As to the manner in which original sin is propagated, it is a most difficult question, in resolving which, divines have always laboured, and will always labour, without being able to satisfy themselves."‡ So much therefore is unquestionable. On the admission that the soul is created, the doctrine of original sin becomes altogether inexplicable. We ask, Can more than this be said, by way of objection to the doctrine of the generation of the whole man?

But this theory not only renders the doctrine of original sin inexplicable. It is in fact irreconcilably hostile to that doctrine. If the soul be an immediate creation of God, § 14. Creation theory on it. two conclusions are unavoidable. The first is, that the souls of Adam's posterity were not in him at all; and, consequently, did not and could not sin in him, nor fall in him. The second is, that they cannot be originally depraved. The works

\* Turretin., Locus IX. Qu. xii. 6.

† Pictet's Theology, Book IV. Ch. v.

‡ Ibid. § 18.





of God cannot but be, like him, good. And it is impossible that moral agents, created immediately by him, should come from his hand corrupt. To suppose it so, would be to charge God with being the author of depravity and sin. The inquirer who will search the pages of the most orthodox writers, that have attempted to reconcile the difficulties here suggested, will find nothing but a strange mixture of Pelagian and Manichean theories, veiled under the subtleties of the scholastic terminology. In respect to the fact that, if the soul is an immediate creation, it was not in Adam, we are told that, "although the souls were not in Adam, as to origin of essence, because they are created by God, they are rightly said to have been in him, as to origin of subsistence, so far forth as they were to be joined to bodies as constituent parts of those persons who are sons of Adam, and who therefore in this respect are rightly accounted guilty in Adam."\* That is to say, it was the design of God, at the time of the creation of Adam, to create a series of souls out of nothing by his own sole and immediate power, and cause them to dwell for a time in clay, which should hold a sort of vegetative relation to that in which the souls which apostatized in the garden dwelt. Therefore, it may be truly said that our souls were in those apostates, and sinned in them, and are now therefore guilty! Is such the idea which God's word gives of the extent of our relation to Adam; and responsibility for his sin? Is this the doctrine of the Reformed confessions? That which saves the statement from self-convicted absurdity is the obscure terminology in which the doctrine is clothed. To say that we were not in Adam as to essence, but were so as to subsistence, has a sound which may pass for something more, if not too closely examined. And yet even the speciousness of this phraseology is dependent upon a false assumption. The theory which it purports to state is inconsistent even with the position that we were in Adam as to origin of subsistence. For it is a part of the doctrine that God, and not Adam, was the cause of our subsistence, by inserting the newly-created souls into the bodies.

\* Turretin., *Locus IX. Qu. xii. 10.*

As to the difficulty in respect to the propagation of depravity, on the supposition of the creation of the soul, orthodox writers vacillate between a Manichean ascription of the original corruption to the body,—a covert reference of it to God as the author,—and a scholastic semi-Pelagianism, which represents the soul as created neither holy nor unholy, and attributes its ultimate depravity to surrounding circumstances. The first theory alluded to, has a singular similarity to the heresy of Manes, not only in attributing moral depravity to the corporeal frame, as such; but, also, in the recognition of an element in the constitution of man, which is neither corporeal nor purely spiritual. It is variously designated, as, "the animal and vital spirits,"—"the dispositions of the body,"—"the system of bodily appetites and propensities, with the fancy and imagination." These are not allowed to be attributes of the soul; for, whilst the soul is described as created, and without native impurity, these are recognised as descending from Adam, depraved, and operating to the depravation of the soul. On the other hand, they certainly are not matter, nor phenomena of mere matter. In both this and the heresy of Manes, there is the same contrast of the immediately divine original of the soul, as compared with that of the body. In both, there is the same doctrine of the soul's essential and original freedom from moral evil. In both, there is the same attributing of it to the material body; and the same associating with it of a tertium quid, which Manes represented as a sensuous soul, and the modern theory designates by the names of its several attributes, but describes in terms which identify it as the same. In both, this and the body are the agencies which embrace the soul as in a prison, and bring it under an involuntary and necessary defilement and guilt. "They having become irregular, excessive, and perverted by the fall," says a highly respectable writer, "do unavoidably corrupt the soul, and enslave it to sin."

The theory that the souls were, at their first creation, neither pure nor impure, but simply not-pure, involves and grew out of an entirely false conception as to the true nature of original righteousness and depravity. Says Luther, "The schoolmen



argue that original righteousness was not connatural; that is, not a part of human nature as originally created; but a certain ornament only, additionally bestowed upon man as a separate gift;—just as if we should place a garland on the head of a beautiful maiden. A garland is, certainly, no part of the nature of a virgin, but a something added from without, and might be taken away again without any violation of her nature. These schoolmen, therefore, argue, both concerning man and concerning devils also, that, although they lost their original righteousness, yet their natural properties remained pure as they were originally created. This doctrine, however, as it takes from the magnitude of original sin, is to be shunned as a deadly poison.\* Thus justly does the illustrious Reformer characterize this Romish corruption of scriptural doctrine. Yet is it the very theory to which recourse is had in the present instance. The soul is created in a not-pure state; that is, neither holy nor depraved. But what does this mean? A soul, in whatever condition, is a creature, invested with certain attributes, which must hold specific and clearly defined relations to the law of God. If active the law demands conformity of action to its precept. If inactive or quiescent, still does the law assert its authority, demanding that the attitude of the powers shall be in conformity with its holiness. To talk of a soul which has not a moral nature, is absurd. To describe a creature possessed of a moral nature, which yet sustains no specific relation to the moral law, is a contradiction in terms. To imagine such a creature occupying a position of neutrality as respects the obligations of the law thus laying hold of its nature, is equally absurd. An irrational beast, a stock, or a stone, may be merely not-pure. For all that the phrase can mean is, that moral relations are not predicable of it. But in no stage in the existence of the human soul, neither in the order of thought, nor in fact, can it be otherwise than responsible to the law, and, therefore, in an attitude of conformity or of non-conformity to it. It must be either pure or impure.

\* Luther on the first five chapters of Genesis, Edinburgh, 1868, p. 220.

We cannot pursue the subject in further detail. The whole theory, however explained, involves the entire severance of the race from Adam, and the denial that we either were in him, or sinned in him, or are depraved by the propagation of his corruption. This is implicitly admitted by Van Mastricht, when he says, "Augustine, of old, and many of the fathers, many of the Lutherans, and some of the Reformed, because they could not otherwise conceive of the propagation of original corruption, supposed it to be by seminal tradition, by which the whole man, and therefore both body and soul alike, is propagated. The first error of these all is this, that they suppose corruption, numerically the same with Adam's, to be propagated; whereas it is only the same in species."\* If it is not numerically the same, it comes not to us from him. Its origin is not, then, in him. He was only the first sinner in order of time. The alternative is, that each soul successively apostatizes; or, that they are created corrupt. Such are the inconsistencies to which the most orthodox writers are led, when they attempt to vindicate the creation theory, in consistency with the testimony of the Scriptures respecting the nature of man. This same excellent and orthodox divine, when expounding the doctrine of original sin, and defending it against Pelagian objections, entirely forgets the position here taken. In reply to the assertion that "we neither existed, nor consented to Adam's sin," he says, "But we did exist, and consent, and sin, in our cause, in the one Adam, Rom. v. 12. They object that the sin itself does not exist, and therefore cannot be imputed. But, although it does not exist physically, yet it does exist morally, in the same sense in which any sins, the physical action being past, remain morally."† We leave the reader to determine how, these latter positions being true, the other can stand; or the soul be recognised as a new creation of a holy God.

§ 15. *Recapitulation.* We might pursue the subject further. But we trust it is already apparent how little is gained, and at what a disproportionate cost, by denying the generation of

\* Van Mastricht, Lib. iv. cap. ii. § 85.

† Ibid. § 24.





the whole man, and asserting the creation of the human soul. A doctrine, more encumbered with insuperable difficulties, it seems to us, could hardly be imagined. At the outset, it strips the soul of moral agency and accountability in the attempt to divest it of that moral purity, of which, if the immediate workmanship of God, it must be possessed. By way of compensation for this extraordinary representation, it exhibits the body as a moral agent, invested with a depravity which does not consist in perverted reason, conscience or will,—for it has none of these; which does not consist in hostility to the law,—for the law is addressed to intelligence and will;—a depravity which is, by admission, not properly predicable of the body at all; and which is confessedly existent no otherwise than inchoate and in a latent tendency. This latent and inconceivable depravity of the body, it nevertheless clothes with such power as to defile the soul, by an influence, which, although exerted by mere matter, is denied to be a physical force; and, although there is no possible intervening instrumentality, is denied to be an immediate influence. Forgetful of the necessity of a suitable subject of which to predicate them, appetites and passions, dispositions and imagination, are recognised as descending from Adam, by natural generation; and are called in to aid the body in depraving the soul;—thus reducing the advocates of this scheme to the dilemma of attributing these to the mere body,—which is materialism; of acknowledging that, belonging to the soul, they with it descend from Adam; or of taking refuge in the Manichean fiction of a sensuous soul, belonging to the body, and distinct from the pure and heaven-originated spirit. It attributes to the body, in conjunction with the appetites and imagination, a creative power, in the production of new and depraved forces, to the eradication of which, the infinite power of the Holy Spirit is requisite. The in-being in Adam, of which the Scriptures so unequivocally speak, is, in the crucible of this theory, reduced to the inane idea, that, having been in the mind of God designed to occupy bodies derived from Adam's body, the souls of all the human family may, therefore, be said to have been in Adam; although he was neither the cause of their essence nor subsistence; of the

first of which, God was the creative cause, and of the second, the efficient, by uniting them to their bodies. In short, the whole aspect of the case is that of a deadly struggle between the theory here set forth and the doctrine of the Scriptures on our relation to Adam;—a struggle in which, by the assistance of subtle distinctions and definitions, the terms of the Bible doctrine are permitted to stand, but robbed of their true significance. It cannot be a matter of surprise, that, in such circumstances, it should continually happen, that wherever a philosophic spirit is developed, this antagonism is brought into action; and the weapons here furnished are turned against the doctrine of original sin. Pelagianism is not the only form of heresy. The doctrine concerning the nature of man is not the only doctrine to which the carnal mind is naturally hostile. And yet this has been the starting-point of almost every defection which has occurred in the Reformed church. Whatever the ultimate shape which heresies have assumed, the first step has almost invariably been some form of error on the subject of original sin. We are persuaded that the secret of this is to be traced to the theory of the creation of the soul and propagation of sin, here examined.

We have glanced at a few passages of the Scriptures in which our doctrine is formally asserted, or involved by direct and inevitable implication. But it would be an utter mistake to imagine that the Scripture argument in its favour is limited to a series of minute criticisms upon isolated passages in the Bible. On the contrary, the idea of the derivation of our entire being from our parents runs through every part of the book, and reappears continually in every variety of form. From the nature of the case, we are cut off from this aspect of the argument. To its elucidation volumes would be requisite, instead of a few pages. The doctrine in question constantly occurs in the historical scriptures, either in the way of formal statement, or of allusion, as to an unquestioned and unquestionable fact. In the poetic books, whether narrative, prophetic, or devotional, whether prayer or praise, it everywhere presents itself; at one time, the theme of admiring contemplation in reference to the wonderful nature of the phenomena, and at another the subject



of penitential confession in view of the corruption so derived. In the doctrinal scriptures, it is made the basis of the whole doctrine of our ruin and the whole system of grace. They everywhere predicate it, as fundamental to all the representations and arguments which they exhibit on these subjects. This doctrine is thus inwrought into the very texture of the Bible; recurring continually, without any caution whatever, by which the begetting asserted should be limited to the body; but, on the contrary, contemplating the moral nature much more than the physical. On the other hand, but a single passage—Heb. xii. 9—is adduced from the whole Bible, which it can be pretended even seems to look the other way. And in that case the seeming is consequent upon a forced interpretation, at variance with the accustomed meaning of the language employed, as well as with the analogy of Scripture, thus so complete. We make this statement, because it must be evident to any candid interpreter, that the scriptures which merely declare God to be the maker of the soul, are no more conclusive to the purpose for which they are usually cited on this subject, than would be the addition of those which speak with at least equal emphasis of the body, to prove that both body and soul are the immediate workmanship of God, and that the human species is not propagated by generation at all!

Add the fact, that orthodox opposers of our doctrine admit its truth in legal intendment, and predicate its constructive verity as the fundamental basis, upon which rests the whole system of God's dealings with our ruined and apostate world. In view of these considerations, to which we might add many others, we feel fully justified in planting ourselves firmly upon the position, that the entire being of the child, body and soul, in its unity, is derived by generation from the parents;—that our whole nature, in all its elements, flows to us from the first parents of the race. This we take to be the unambiguous testimony of the whole word of God.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE APOSTASY OF ADAM.

THE rich endowments with which Adam was crowned, and the condescending grace with which he was dealt, were unavailing to hold him to integrity. In regard to the fall of our first parents, we shall not attempt to show how sin entered into the world. No man can explain how the first unholy emotion could find lodgment in the heart of a holy being,—angel or man; or how suggestions of sin could constitute temptation to the holy; since it would seem that, to exert any power, they must appeal to unholy propensities; which as yet had no existence. No system of theology, nor scheme of deism, can solve this problem. The fact stands attested, not only by the word of God, but by the whole history of man. It all proclaims him to be a fallen being; once exalted in dignity and purity, but now sinful, degraded and lost. But, how this could be, is one of the hidden things of God.

The attempt is sometimes made to explain the apostasy, by the assumption, that a proclivity to defection is of the very nature of created beings; and that therefore apostasy was the inevitable consequence of the withholding of special divine support from Adam. But the supposition will not bear a moment's examination. The creatures possess precisely those powers which God has conferred, and no others. To suppose a downward tendency to be essential to them, is to charge, that God, in making them, has incorporated in their being a perverse energy, by which they are forced astray. But this is absurd and blasphemous. Whatever God made was very good,—an epithet which applies to every faculty and every attribute of the creatures, as they proceeded from his hand. To say that he implanted in them a dis-





position to turn from him, which it requires his own omnipotence to restrain, is to make Adam to have been created, not holy, but depraved; and God to be the author of man's apostasy and sins.

Whilst, however, we know not how a being, created holy, could be turned aside to sin, thus much we do know,—that man's apostasy came to pass through the free agency of our first parents. They were created with a nature which was characterized by affinities of various kinds. Some of these soared upward toward the Holy One, and found satisfaction and growth in contemplations of his glory, in praises of his attributes, and communion with him by the Spirit. These holy affinities were endowed with an original strength and vigour, which gave them the mastery over the whole being. Yet was not theirs such a preponderance as was absolutely overwhelming,—such a mastery as implied undisputed supremacy, and confirmed dominion. If Adam is ever established in holiness, it must be not, by a creative endowment, to him involuntary, and therefore without merit or honour; but through constant vigilance, and a diligent use of the faculties which he possessed, and improvement of the means which were within his reach,—the study of the Creator's character, communion with him, and recourse to his Spirit for strength. Contrasted, but not opposed, to these, were another class of affinities, which laid hold of the world, the creatures and self, in an embrace, vigorous, though inferior in strength to that which went forth to God. These affinities, and the affections and emotions which were correspondent with them, were in themselves right; and were designed and perfectly adapted to subserve man's happiness, and to the fulfilment of his great end,—his Maker's honour. But these principles are thus innocent and safe, only so long as they wait in subservience to the higher considerations of God's love and glory. The assumption by them of the sceptre and the throne, is of itself apostasy from God; it is, to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator; and inasmuch as the claim of God to the supremacy is persistent and uncompromising, and therefore utterly inconsistent with the supremacy of earthly things,—the result is, not merely inferior love, but hostility to God, and an utter refusal

of all allegiance to him. Thus, although heavenly principles were implanted in Adam, and placed on the throne of his nature, they were not made independent of culture and care; nor invested with a power which might not be broken, through neglect and sloth. Whilst other principles were associated with these, and even innocence might indulge in earthly enjoyments and the pleasures of sense, it must be with a moderation and wisdom, to appreciate them at their true and subordinate value; and with a watchfulness and care proportionate to the greatness of the interests at stake, and the danger that these lawful but powerful inmates of the heart may become usurpers of its throne.

Thus was Adam constituted in the day of his creation. Two sets of principles fill the balances in his heart. And, although the kindness and love of his Maker has, with creative hand, given the claims of God and holiness a superior weight, which presses down the scale, yet does he not thus, by mere sovereignty, seal the nature and control the liberty of his creature. Man himself is placed upon the throne and invested with a royal freedom, by his own choice to determine his character, and at his discretion to fix his own eternal destiny. He was endowed with perfect holiness and rectitude, and with a free will, which, whilst perfectly competent, in the use of the appropriate means, to continuance in uprightness, was unlimited in the alternative set before him,—to choose the evil or the good, the blessing or the curse. The tempter comes, and with wily art suits his seductions to the nature of his victims. He appeals to innocent appetites. He only persuades to criminal indulgence. To Eve's love of beauty he presents the tree "beautiful to the eye." To her sensual appetite he urges that it is "good for food." Her ambition is fired by the assurance, "Ye shall be as gods," and her thirst for knowledge by the mystic virtue of the fruit, "to be desired to make one wise." Her fears are hushed by his swearing to the lie that they "shall not surely die." Her senses, excited in view of the seen and attractive object, render her all unconscious of the presence of the holy and unseen God; and the ardour of her appetites, aroused and burning for sensual pleasure, induces entire forgetfulness of the higher pleasures





realized in his service, and the superior joys flowing from his smile. The temptation finds lodging in the breast of hapless Eve. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."—Gen. iii. 6. Thus the appetites plead; conscience is hushed; holy considerations are forgotten; the reason weighs; the choice is made; the fatal fruit is plucked; and man is fallen! Of the process of Adam's overthrow, we have not so detailed an account. Enough, however, is revealed to enable us to see that, although different in the form of assault, the temptation was essentially the same in its nature. To her it comes in the guise of beautiful fruit; to him, in the form of his lovely wife. Shall he forego all the sweets of her companionship? Shall he cast her out of the temple of his affections as an unclean and accursed thing,—an abhorring to his soul? Or, contemning the sovereignty of God, defying his wrath, and refusing his favour and his love, shall he join in her sin, and so share her doom, whatever it be? The fatal choice is made; and man, for love of woman, turns his back on God. Thus "our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God."

In the transgression of our first parents, two things are to be carefully distinguished; viz., the heart sin and the overt act,—the apostasy, and its first fruit. The law of God had been already violated; man was fallen before the fruit had been plucked, or the rebellion thus signalized. The law not only required outward obedience, but especially claimed the fealty of the heart; and this was withdrawn before any outward token had indicated the sad change. That Eve well understood this heart-searching demand of the divine law, is clearly evidenced by her reply to the serpent's insidious interrogatory about the tree. The tempter said to the woman, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which

§ 2. Process  
of the apos-  
tasy.

is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."—Gen. iii. 1-3. In reference to this reply of Eve, a certain writer absurdly remarks that "Eve's first sin was lying; for God had not forbidden them to touch the tree." On the contrary, her language truly expresses the force of the divine requirement, as forbidding the allowance of a covetous emotion, or a desiring approach to the forbidden object. Equally without reason seems to be Henry's supposition that the serpent "took advantage by finding Eve near the forbidden tree, and probably gazing upon the fruit of it, only to satisfy her curiosity. They that would not eat the forbidden fruit must not come near the forbidden tree." The form of the question of Satan, which is evidently framed for the purpose of calling her attention to the tree, shows her not to have been at the time in the act of gazing upon it. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree?" He does not say, "of this tree." So, too, the terms in which, in her reply, she describes the tree, show her not to have been immediately by it so as to look upon it:—"Of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, [not "of this tree,"] God hath said." So far from the fact of Eve being supposed near the tree implying any thing improper or unguarded, it was the duty of the pair to cultivate that, as well as all other parts of the garden, and, if need be, to dress and keep that, as well as the other trees. Temptation is to be avoided, not by flying from the path of duty, but in that path, by watchfulness and prayer. Thus far Eve has not only maintained her integrity, but, by the recollection and statement alike of God's beneficent care and his just command, has recognised her obligations, and rendered transgression inexcusable.

The first criminal emotion which stirred in her heart would seem to have been dissatisfaction with the endowments, temporal and spiritual, which she and her husband enjoyed from the hands of the gracious Creator. The luxuriant fruitfulness of a virgin world, and the delicious treasures of a garden planted by God, were poured at their feet. Their home was adorned with the attractions of "every tree that was pleasant to the sight." The animal tribes were made obedient to their will; and God himself



condescended to be their instructor, companion and friend. Earth full of delights was their present possession; and life eternal in heaven their prospective inheritance. Yet all these rich blessings were now disesteemed by the foolish heart of our falling mother. All was not enough to secure perfect content and convey complete happiness, whilst one object presented itself which God reserved as his own.

The next step was, doubt as to the truthfulness of God. He had declared, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." This declaration was present to her memory, and repeated by her to the serpent. The tempter ventures, in most arrogant and atrocious terms, to charge the Holy One not only with falsehood, but with an imbecile jealousy and fraud, lest his creatures should attain to the exaltation of godhead, in derogation of his divinity. And Eve believed the lie, impious and absurd though it was, and disbelieved the testimony of her Maker, the pledges of whose love shone all around her.

Immediately there sprang up in her an atrocious wish and hope of independence of the wisdom and authority of God. Satan assured her that the reason of the threatening of death was, that God knew that the fruit would make them as gods. And, belief in God's truth and reverence for his authority being lost, no falsehood is too preposterous for belief, and no aspiration too lofty or too impious to be cherished. "The woman saw that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise," to "be as gods;" and "she took thereof and did eat; and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat." Thus aspiring after a knowledge independent of God, and forbidden by him, and aiming at an elevation of rank to equality with him, they gained the hapless discovery of intellects clouded, of holiness lost, of happiness forfeited, and of ruin incurred. Instead of becoming as gods, they lost their former fellowship with God, and became as devils, cast down in sin to misery and woe.

In short, the position of our first parents was one of atheistic unbelief. Whilst they sought divinity for themselves, they denied it to be in God. By cherishing dissatisfaction with his dealings with them, they denied his perfect goodness. Their

disbelief of the threatening was a denial that he was holy, just and true. In aspiring after divinity, they were guilty of regarding him as one like themselves, with whom they might compete. And in seeking for happiness and aiming at elevation independent of him, they denied him to be the "all and in all;" they assumed that he was not the spring of their being, nor the alone fountain of existence and blessedness. Thus, either did they appeal to some other than the God that made them, as the Supreme, "by whom, and for whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things;" or, they asserted a self-poised and uncreated existence to themselves; and claimed to be, already, what they at the same time strove to attain unto,—gods.

The acts of intelligent creatures must spring from motives,—and those, such as are adequate to the character of the action. The emotions here indicated are clearly traceable in the history of the apostasy of Adam and Eve. Such motives are alone sufficient to account for the result, the coveting of a tree, whose untasted fruit constituted God's single reservation in giving them unlimited possession of all the world;—their violating a command of their Maker, most explicit and well understood, and venturing on a penalty, which was present to their minds, and assured them of infinite ruin following transgression, if God were indeed the infinite One. Thus, already apostate, the treason was sealed by their partaking of the forbidden fruit,—in that act communing in the sacrament of Jehovah's curse. Eve "took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

Of the process of Adam's overthrow, we have his own brief statement to his Judge:—"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."—Gen. iii. 12. The apostle Paul states, that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 14. From these accounts, it would seem that Adam was not for a moment deceived by the fraud which had been committed on his wife. But rather, overcome by inordinate love to her, he determined to share her fate. Thus he became the legitimate father of a race, who in all their generations are prone to "worship





and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is over all, God blessed forever."

There are several elements which are to be distinctly marked in estimating the evil of the first sin of Adam.

§ 3. *Evil of the apostasy.* 1. It involved the most shameful ingratitude.

What blessing which infinite wisdom and goodness could devise was not bestowed on them? In the beauties of surrounding nature,—in the homage of the inferior tribes,—in the abundance, the variety and excellence of the fruits of the garden,—in the symmetry and vigour of their bodies, and the perfection of all their senses, constituting avenues of perpetual pleasures,—in the nobility of immortal minds stamped with their Maker's image,—and, above all, in communion vouchsafed them with that Creator,—in every circumstance of their condition, and every element of their nature, they found arguments of the perfect love of Him who had endowed them with being, and filled them with happiness;—and who, in addition to all, had promised them translation to a still higher station, and more happy state,—to life in his own immediate presence in heaven. For all this goodness and grace, the Father of their spirits claims the poor return of acknowledgment that these are his gifts,—acknowledgment rendered, by respecting the reservation, from all the bounteous abundance of a teeming earth, of the fruit of a single tree. Thus Adam, by plucking the forbidden fruit was guilty of a most base and ungrateful denial of the obligations he was under to infinite goodness, and of robbing his Maker, not only of the meed of thankfulness for what was enjoyed, but, of the possession of what was reserved.

2. It was a wicked distrust in God. Not simply that it implied unbelief in the threatening of death, and the promise of life. This it did involve; but much more than this. It implied an utter apostasy from that filial and perfect confidence and trust, which a creature so circumstanced owed, not only by the motives of duty, but by the arguments of reason and the claims of gratitude. It implied suspicion of the motives which induced the prohibition of the forbidden tree;—suspicion including disbelief in the unapproachable infinitude of God, and in his perfect good-

ness to man; since it supposed him to reserve that tree, lest man by eating should attain to equality with him. It intimated a despair of finding in God that which could fully satisfy the wants of the soul. It was disbelief of the threatening, and discredit of the promise of eternal life; and at the same time a disparagement of its excellence, and contempt of its offer.

3. The sin of Adam was an act of atrocious rebellion. As maker, God had an unquestionable right to impose on his creatures what laws he saw fit. And, having imposed a law of unexceptionable excellence, the command in regard to the tree involved in itself the whole law, all whose precepts concentrate themselves in the one essential duty of supreme love and obedience to God. The precept respecting the tree, constituted the only form in which the sovereignty of his Maker interposed, to limit the actions, or define the possessions, which he had lent to man. The act of transgression was therefore a conscious rebellion of the parents of our race, against Him from whose creative hand they had just sprung into being. And, as there is no middle ground in this matter, this act was an assault upon the very throne and divinity of God; whom, first denying to be God, it next attempted to rob of the prerogatives, the homage and the sceptre of divinity.

4. This implies another element which is clearly traceable in the history,—a proud and impious ambition. Not content with the inferior though blessed and privileged estate in which they were created, they claim a higher station. Not content with that image of God in which they shone, they aspire to Godhead itself. Not only is the authority of Jehovah set aside, but, as though that were not enough, the authority of man's own will is held paramount to that of his Maker. He "seats himself in the temple of God, and shows himself that he is God."

Could we suppose that, when the heavenly hosts were assembled on the morning of their creation, and from amid an effulgent glory which proclaimed the presence of the Creator, the law, holy and good, was announced by his omnipotent voice,—as the radiant throng burst forth in adoring anthems of praise, one had been seen, among that bright and blessed throng, to cast away



the harp of praise, to turn his back upon the throne of light, and attempt to usurp a position of dignity assigned to some loftier seraph, to wrest the harp from some more skilful hand, and attune it to other notes than those of Jehovah's praise!—what horror would such conduct have inspired in the harmonious multitude! How atrocious would his attitude appear! Would he not have stood justly chargeable with rebellion the most arrogant, with ingratitude the most odious, and impiety most atrocious? A creature, each moment of whose existence, and each element of whose enjoyments, flows from the beneficence of his Maker,—to rebel against his authority, although exercised with perfect holiness, and infinite kindness to him! A creature, himself endowed with perfect happiness, and enriched with gifts bestowed from the treasures of God,—to despise those gifts and that happiness; and repine because his Creator still claimed his homage, and asserted and exercised his own most righteous sovereignty! A creature, whose existence is merely because it pleased God to give it, and whose annihilation would not cause one chord of the universal harmony to vibrate in less perfect unison to creation's mighty anthem of adoring praise,—impiously refusing to concur with the rest to the great and becoming end of all, the glory of the Maker, in the harmony, happiness and praise of his creatures; and, as far as in his power, madly striving to thrust aside the blessed and only Potentate, and to set his own will and pleasure, his own ease and honour, instead of the will and glory of Him by whom and for whom are all things, and whose infinite power and goodness are the sole pledges of the rebel's existence! Would not all holy intelligences demand immediate and overwhelming punishment to the author of such wickedness?

Suppose the Creator to permit this example, unpunished, to spread contagion. In the midst of such warring elements, where would be the Creator's glory? where the design of creation? Amid surrounding insubordination and conflict, where would be the happiness of those even who should remain loyal to their Sovereign, and faithful to the end of their being? Would not the return of "chaos and old night" be far better than such a scene? Were some wandering star to rush across

the track of our solar system, dashing the elements in ruin together, it would be a little matter, compared with a moral convulsion such as this.

The case supposed arouses in us emotions of indignation and horror. But, alas! it is no fancy sketch. In its most atrocious aspect, it is fully realized in the instance before us. What matters it that it was man tabernacled in clay, and not a seraph of altogether spiritual mould? What matters it that our transgressing parents did not at that moment see God with their natural eyes, nor behold the ineffable light in which he robes himself in the dwelling-place of his glory? Had they not as convincing evidence of his presence, power, holiness and goodness as the angels possess? Had they not as intelligible a revelation of his will as they can have? Yet did they stop their ears to his voice, close their eyes to the manifestation of his glory, condemn the rich gifts of his goodness, and refuse to render him that service and honour which were his due, and strive to exalt themselves to independence of his authority and to equality with his divinity and his throne.

Such, then, was the nature of the act by which man was separated from the favour of his God and exposed to his fearful displeasure;—an act, insignificant in itself, but clothed with tremendous meaning, as it proclaimed, in unmistakable language, to the startled universe, rebellion consummated against God, and defiance hurled against the throne of omnipotent Holiness.

But the sin of our first parents was not only an act of atrocious wickedness; it was an apostasy or depravation of their nature,—a turning away of all their powers, and their whole being, from the love and service of the Holy One, to the embrace of corruption and the servitude of sin. Such is the order of the moral system, which God has seen good to establish among the intelligent creatures, that they cannot occupy a neutral position as toward him. Either will their affections, and the whole fulness of their being, tend in ardour of desire toward God, and in entireness of devotion to him as their centre and end; or those affections and that being will recoil from him, and realize aversion and

§ 4. Deprava-  
tion of the  
race.





hostility. Between these two conditions, the Creator has left no alternative. Hence, the very act of apostasy—and that is the very essence of sin—is such a turning away from God as constitutes, in and of itself, the assumption of a hostile attitude, the embrace of aversion to him, and the submitting of all the powers to this hostile tendency. And, since all the powers are comprehended by this alien influence, it is evident that there is, in the apostate, nothing upon which can be predicated the possibility of his unaided return; but, on the contrary, the aversion will continually bear the being farther away from God, and widen, forever, the gulf between. To this purpose is the testimony of Paul:—"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"—Rom. vi. 16. Thus the sinner sells himself a slave to his own sins, and comes into bondage to his own apostasy.

Such was the case with Adam. Not only did he transgress the command of his Maker,—not only did he violate the rule of righteousness,—but, in so doing, he turned away from God, in a revolt which embraced his entire nature, pervaded his whole being, and possessed every power. In entering upon trial, he enjoyed a perfect moral freedom. He had power and liberty to choose holiness or sin, to embrace evil or good. By his apostasy, he submitted himself to an absolute tyranny of corruption, a most degrading servitude to sin. So that now, no longer able to choose the good or work righteousness, he was free only to evil, and led captive in chains of enmity to God, to work wickedness with greediness.

Not only so, but the apostasy, in which he thus plunged, attached to him, not merely as he was a distinct and individual person, but as he was the head and fountain of the race. Comprehending and involving his whole being and nature, it attached, at once, to all who were in that nature, his seed; binding them with him in the crime of the apostasy thus wrought, in the depravity thus embraced and the penalty thus incurred.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE PERMISSION OF MORAL EVIL.

HERE a difficulty is urged, respecting the power, goodness and holiness of God. How can it be reconciled with these, that moral

§ 1. *Phases of Optimism.* evil has a place under his government?

Plato represents Socrates as quoting from Anaxagoras the doctrine, that *Nous*, or Wisdom, was the originating cause of all things. Upon this, Socrates reasons that, if it be so, the Wisdom by which all things are regulated will dispose each in such a way as will be best. If, therefore, it be the wish of any one to ascertain the reason of a thing, in what way it is originated, or perishes, or is, he must discover, in regard to it, in what way it is best for it either to be, to endure, or to do any thing.\*

The doctrine thus hinted by Plato was, by Leibnitz, incorporated into his system of Christian philosophy, and constituted the fundamental principle in his great work, the *Tentamina Theodiceæ*. In his controversy with Dr. Samuel Clarke, he says, "Not mathematical principles, (according to the usual sense of that word,) but metaphysical principles, ought to be opposed to those of the materialists. Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle in some measure had the knowledge of these principles; but I pretend to have established them demonstratively in my *Theodicea*, though I have done it in a popular manner. The great foundation of mathematics is the principle of contradiction or identity; that is, that a proposition cannot be true and false at the same time, and, therefore, that *a* is *a*, and cannot be *not a*. This single principle is sufficient to demonstrate every part of

\* *Platonis Phædon*, xlii.





arithmetic and geometry; that is, all mathematical principles. But, in order to proceed from mathematics to natural philosophy, another principle is requisite, as I have observed in my Theodicea: I mean the principle of a *sufficient reason*; viz., that nothing happens without a reason why it should be so rather than otherwise.\* This principle of a sufficient reason, Leibnitz thus uses in the Theodicea:—"The infinite wisdom of God, joined to a no less infinite goodness, could not but choose that which is best. For, as a less evil has something of the nature of a good, so a less good has somewhat of the nature of evil, if it place an obstacle in the way of a greater good; and there might be something to be mended in the works of God, if there were room for doing better. And, as in mathematics, where there is neither maximum nor minimum, nor any thing distinctive, all are made equal, or, if that does not take place, nothing at all can be done, so also of perfect wisdom, which is regulated by rule, no less than the processes of mathematics, it may be said, that unless among all possible worlds there had been a best, God would have produced none. . . . And although all time and space were filled, yet will it always be possible for them to be filled in an infinite variety of ways; and an infinite variety of worlds would be possible, from which it behooved God to select the best, since he may do nothing except according to the rule of supreme reason."† In fact, the Tentamina Theodicæ is throughout designed as an illustration of this doctrine. Stapfer was a professed disciple of the Leibnitian philosophy.‡ In his Institutes of Theology, he enters into an exposition and defence of the opinion in question. He thus states the standard of excellence to which the universe is referred, in pronouncing it the best:—"The divine intellect represents all things distinctly to itself, and therefore knows instantly what means are most fit to accomplishing his end.

\* Correspondence between Leibnitz and Clarke, p. 19.

† Leibnitii Tentamina Theodicæ, Pars Prima, § 8.

‡ "Capite tertio præcipua religionis Christianæ purioris dogmata in nexu suo exhibuimus. De capite autem hoc tenendum, quod in primis ejus sectionibus, quæ Theologiam naturalem spectant, Wolfiana secuti sumus Principia, Theodicæamque Leibnitianam."—Stapfer's Preface.

But, since God decreed to produce this in preference to all other possible worlds, it is therefore demonstrated to be best adapted to his end, and therefore, also, the most perfect." "He is called independent who has in himself nothing the reason of which is in any other thing. But God is independent: hence it is impossible to conceive any thing in his infinite perfection, the reason of which is contained in any other being but himself. Hence no other being can contribute any thing to his infinite perfection; and in relation to God, nothing whatever can be called good, unless so far as it may be a representation of his infinite perfection. Since in relation to God a thing is good as it is a representation of his infinite perfection, and since the infinite perfection of God is to be understood no otherwise than as embracing all the divine attributes, or the whole fulness of God, therefore in relation to God nothing can be accounted good, but what has respect to all his attributes, either as a symbol or shadow of them."\*

This doctrine, according to which, the present system of the universe is the best that is possible, is known as the optimistic, or beltistean, theory. It was adopted by Edwards, and became a conspicuous feature in the theology of New England, constituting the plea by which the divines of that school justify the efficient agency which they attribute to God in the existence of sin. But the doctrine, in passing into the theology of Edwards and his followers, experienced a fatal transformation, by which its identity was lost. This change consisted in the substitution of "fitness to secure the greatest happiness to the greatest number," instead of, the will and nature of God, as the standard of excellence to which reference is had.

Edwards, speaking of the providence of God respecting sin, says, "There is no inconsistency in supposing that God may hate a thing as it is in itself, and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his will it should come to pass, considering all consequences. I believe there is no person of good understanding who will venture to say he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass

\* Stapferi Inst. Theol., tom. I. cap. iii. sec. iv. §§. 389, 407, 408.



and extent of existence, and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world. And if so, it will certainly follow, that an infinitely wise being, who always chooses what is best, must choose that there should be such a thing. And if so, then such a choice is not an evil, but a wise and holy, choice. And if so, then that providence which is agreeable to such a choice is a wise and holy providence.\* In a marginal note appended to this sentence, he adopts the language of an English Arminian writer, who says, "It is difficult to handle the necessity of evil in such a manner as not to stumble such as are not above being alarmed at propositions which have an uncommon sound. But if philosophers will but reflect calmly on the matter, they will find that, consistently with the unlimited power of the Supreme Cause, it may be said, that in the best-ordered system, evils must have place." "If the Author and Governor of all things be infinitely perfect, then whatever is, is right; of all possible systems he hath chosen the best, and consequently there is no absolute evil in the universe."

Bellamy was very earnest in support of the same doctrine. He says, "I believe that the infinitely wise and holy God, in every part of his conduct relative to the intellectual system, does that which is really wisest and best for him to do, most for his own glory and the good of the system in the whole; and therefore that God's present plan is of all possible plans the best,—most for his glory and the good of the system."† Says a more recent writer, "Let it be understood that the doctrine does not contemplate sin as, on the whole, or in the operations of the divine government, an evil. It is no deduction from the sum of the greatest good. It is an evil, only in the limited views and experience of finite beings. Considered as an event of the divine government, it comes in on the ground of benevolence, and not in the character of sin, or evil. It is a part of the system of benevolence; as much a part as any other event, or series of events. It is, therefore, not to be viewed as a detached and

\* Edwards on the Will, Part IV. § 9.

† Vindication of Discourses on the Permission of Sin, Sect. 2.

necessary means of securing the greatest good, but as a constituent and essential part of that system which involves the greatest good. And if the greatest good is to be the object and rule of benevolence, then it would be morally wrong for God to choose or carry into effect any other system.\*

On the other hand, it is held by the New Haven school, that the reason why evil is in the world, is, that God could not prevent it, in a moral system. Says Dr. Taylor, "*God ven theory.*" (there is no irreverence in saying it) can make nothing else sin but the sinner's act. Do you, then, say that God gave man a nature which he knew would lead him to sin? What if he did?—Do you know that God could have done better,—better on the whole; or better—if he gave him existence at all—even for the individual himself? The error lies in the gratuitous assumption that God could have adopted a moral system, and prevented all sin, or, at least, the present degree of sin. For no man knows this; no man can prove it. The assumption, therefore, is wholly unauthorized as the basis of the present objection; and the objection itself, groundless. On the supposition that the evil which exists is, in respect to divine prevention, incidental to the best possible system, and that, notwithstanding the evil, God will secure the greatest good possible to him to secure,—who can impeach either his wisdom or his goodness, because evil exists? I say, then, that as ignorance is incompetent to make an objection, and as no one knows that this supposition is not a matter of fact, no one has a right to assert the contrary, or even to think it.† "The difficulties on this difficult subject, as it is extensively regarded, result, in the view of the writer, from two very common but groundless assumptions,—assumptions which, so long as they are admitted and reasoned upon, *must* leave the subject involved in insuperable difficulties. The assumptions are these: First, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and as such, so far as it exists, is preferable on the whole to holiness in its stead. Secondly, that God could in a moral

\* An Examination of a Review of Taylor's sermon on Human Depravity, and Hervey's Strictures on that sermon, Hartford, 1829, p. 51.

† Dr. N. W. Taylor's *Concio ad Clerum*, 1828, pp. 28, 29.





system have prevented all sin, or at least the present degree of sin. . . . If holiness in a moral system be preferable on the whole to sin in its stead, why did not a benevolent God, were it possible to him, prevent all sin, and secure the prevalence of universal holiness? Would not a moral universe of perfect holiness, and of course of perfect happiness, be happier and better than one comprising sin and its miseries? And must not infinite benevolence accomplish all the good it can? Would not a benevolent God, then, *had it been possible to him in the nature of things*, have secured the existence of universal holiness in his moral kingdom? . . . Is there, then, the least particle of evidence that the entire prevention of sin in moral beings is possible to God in the nature of things? If not, then what becomes of the very common assumption of such possibility?\*

We have already examined an opinion which assumes to bind and limit the authority of God, by sovereign obligations of benevolence,—“the principles of honour and right.” The two conflicting schemes above exhibited are phases of the same doctrine,—attempts to vindicate the character of God, from imputations which spring immediately from the assumption that he is controlled by certain necessary, extrinsic and supreme obligations, which must be fulfilled, in order to the vindication of his goodness and holiness.

This doctrine, particularly in its more recent forms, labours under a confusion of views, in regard to the divine attributes, *§ 3. Fallacy of optimism.* which vitiates every conclusion that is based upon it. When we contemplate the attribute of justice, we recognise in it such relations to the actions of intelligent creatures as involve certain obligations, which are supreme and unchangeable. Thus, justice demands that the transgressor shall not be acquitted, nor the innocent punished. But the case is very different in regard to benevolence. Whilst it is the characteristic of justice to act in entire conformity to the requirements of law,—in other words, to the declared will of the just One himself,—on the other hand, it is of the very essence of

\* *Concio ad Clerum*, pp. 29-33, margin.

benevolence to be free. To say that God is bound to act so and so, is to take the case specified out of the province of benevolence, and refer it to the tribunal of justice. Hence, to suppose God obliged to act benevolently, in any given case, is to deny the possibility of benevolence in him; since that attribute, to be real, must be uncontrolled by any thing else than the mere discretion of the benefactor, in the bestowal of that, which, as rightfully he may retain, as, graciously bestow. And yet it is only by neglect of a distinction so clear and unquestionable as this, that any one is liable to be led astray with the doctrine of optimism. Should it be said, that God is bound in justice to secure the highest possible amount of happiness for his creatures, it would at once be evident, that there can, in the nature of the case, be no law by which justice is thus bound. On the other hand, benevolence resists the attempt to impose any bonds upon its exercises.

Another objection to this scheme is, that it is founded on entirely inadequate and unworthy views of God himself. “The infinitely wise and holy God, in every part of his conduct relative to the intellectual system, does that which is really wisest and best for him to do.” Such is the statement of Bellamy. But here the question at once occurs, In what sense is the present system the wisest and best of all possible systems? Is it more profitable to God? “Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise is profitable unto himself?”—Job xxii. 2. Nay, can the universe be profitable to him? Did the creation spring from some felt necessity of the Creator? And is this system the best, as it most fully satisfies that want? Or, on the other hand, is it said that the rule of comparison is the welfare of the creatures,—“the greatest good of the system in the whole,”—“the greatest good of the greatest number,”—“the happiness of being in general,”—as it is variously expressed? The question at once occurs, Whence the origin of this system, the existence of the “being in general,” which the theory contemplates? The only scriptural answer is, “He hath made all things for himself,”—for his pleasure,—of his own will. Now, either the system thus had in view is nothing, or it is a



definite and specific thing. If it be not the latter, it is manifestly absurd to predicate any thing of it; and if it be, it can be nothing else than the whole sum of things just as they now are in existence, as Leibnitz constantly and rightly insists. But here it is to be considered, how it can be supposed that, prior to the creation of all things,—the production of “the system,”—God can be obliged, as toward it, to make one thing or another; or how, after it is created, it can be conceived to claim, or he, to be obliged, either to retain it as it is, or to modify it, or make it other than it is; that is, to destroy it, and place something else in its stead. In short, it is a mere absurdity, a mere jingle of unmeaning words, to talk of God being obliged to the system, or to being in general, in any way whatever.

If, then, God is under any obligation to his creatures at all, it must be to them individually, and not to that abstraction which is called “the system.” But it will hardly be attempted to prove that he is thus bound to individuals. When did he come under the obligation, and to whom? Is it due to the devils that they be made happy? Or, if it be not, by what rule of discrimination may any other creature make the claim? The holy are indeed entitled to happiness. But this is not upon any ground of claim springing from “the nature of things,” or the rights of being, but solely by virtue of that covenant which the Creator has seen fit gratuitously to make,—not with man only, but with angels, too,—that he that is holy shall have eternal life.

The error of the theory, as originated by Leibnitz, consisted in the gratuitous assumption that, “unless among all possible worlds there had been a best, God would have produced none;” an assumption which he does not attempt to establish by any better argument than the fanciful appeal, by way of analogy, to mathematics, in which, if “there is neither maximum nor minimum, nor any thing distinctive, all are made equal; or, if that does not take place, nothing at all can be done.” The notion seems to be akin to his favourite doctrine of monads, according to which, there are no two things alike in the universe,—not even among the ultimate atoms of matter. But who shall say that

the infinite wisdom of God, in making this world, exhausted itself? Who does not see, that to assert that he could not make another universe equally good, is to deny, whilst pretending to honour, his infinite wisdom? For a wisdom, the resources of which have been so expended that it cannot again equal its past achievements, is a finite capacity, and not the boundless depth of the infinite God.

In short, the whole scheme of providence, including the creation and entire history of all things, must be referred to the sovereign will of God as the only and all-sufficient reason of its adoption,—to whom, in all its parts and complexity, it was a simple unit; of which one part may not be set in opposition to another, or in independence of it, demanding that it should be as it is, or otherwise. The perfection which attaches to it cannot be relative, since there is no standard of reference except the will that gave it existence. That will, with equal freedom and equal wisdom, might have adopted another; which, however different, had been equally excellent; and for the same reason; to wit, that the will of God gave it being. All we can say, in any case, is, that the work of God is perfect. The only reason we can give,—the only reason we need or ought to seek,—the infinitely sufficient reason, why things are as they are, is that given by our Saviour in view of the perdition of the wise and mighty of the world:—“Even so, Father! for so it seemed good in thy sight.” It is therefore manifest, that, however the optimistic scheme may seem to honour the wisdom and goodness of God, it does neither; since it subordinates his divine beneficence and sovereign will to a constraint, and his excellence to an exterior standard of reference. Thus, in fact, it derogates from his divinity, and so overshadows all the attributes.

Vicious as are the premises thus exposed, still more so is the New Haven doctrine, predicated upon them. Briefly, it is, that God could not have adopted a moral system, and prevented all sin, or at least the present degree of sin. Fully to expose the false and deadly character of this heresy, it would be necessary to trace its relations to the doctrines of human depravity, the atonement, regenera-

§ 4. Cannot  
God prevent  
sin?





tion, sanctification, and the final inheritance of the saints; all of which it defiles and falsifies. A few words, however, will be enough to expose the unscriptural character of the doctrine, which is no less impious than it is erroneous. The positions in which it is entrenched, are thus stated, in the interrogative form, by its author, Dr. Taylor:—"Is there the least particle of evidence that the entire prevention of sin in moral beings is possible to God in the nature of things? If not, then what becomes of the very common assumption of such possibility? All evidence of the truth of this assumption must be derived either from *the nature of the subject*, or from *known facts*. Is there such evidence from *the nature of the subject*? It is here to be remarked that the prevention of sin by any influence that destroys the power to sin, destroys moral agency. Moral agents, then, must possess the *power to sin*. Who, then, can prove *a priori*, or from the nature of the subject, that *a being who CAN sin will NOT sin*? How can it be proved *a priori*, or from the nature of the subject, that a thing *will not* be; when, for aught that appears, it *may* be? On this point is it presumptuous to bid defiance to the powers of human reason? Is there any evidence from facts? Facts, so far as they are known to us, furnish no support to the assumption, that God could in a moral system prevent all sin, or even the present degree of sin. For we know of no creature of God, whose holiness is secured without that influence which results, either directly or indirectly, from the existence of sin and its punishment. . . . It may be true that God will secure under the present system of things the greatest degree of holiness, and the least degree of sin, *which it is possible to him in the nature of things to secure*. Neither the *nature of the subject*, nor *known facts*, furnish a particle of evidence to the contrary. The assumption therefore that God could in a moral system have prevented all sin, or the present degree of sin, is wholly gratuitous and unauthorized, and ought *never to be made the basis of an objection or an argument*."\* The italics are Dr. Taylor's.

The first remark which presents itself is, that this doctrine involves, not merely the possible, but the inevitable, perdition

\* Concio ad Clerum, p. 33, margin.

of every creature in the universe. It is assumed, that the entire prevention of sin in moral beings is, in the nature of things, impossible to God. In each particular case, there is a possibility of apostasy. However slight, then, may be that possibility, although it be counted as one to myriads, in favour of steadfastness, yet, in the lapse of eternity, all those myriads of favourable probabilities will have space to exhaust themselves, not once, but an infinite number of times; so that it is susceptible of mathematical demonstration, that each one of those of whom it is now predicated as an immensely remote possibility that they will fall, will ultimately be subject to a contingency, infinitely more powerful, in determining their fall. It may take myriads of untold ages to work out the result. But at length, if this monstrous doctrine be true, despite all the influences which omnipotence can exert, the mansions of light will be without inhabitant, and,—with reverence be the atrocious conclusion named,—at last, He, who is the first born among many brethren, will be no longer The Undeified! Not only so, but if "moral agents must possess the power to sin," that power is in God; and if it is impossible "to prove *a priori*, or from the nature of the subject, that a thing *will not* be, when, for aught that appears, it *may* be," it is impossible to prove—"I speak as a man"—that God himself will continue forever to be unchangeably the Holy One!

Again, this whole scheme is based on a false assumption, as to the nature of the influence by which men are renewed to holiness, and the heavenly hosts kept in their uprightness. This is assumed to be a merely persuasive power,—an appeal to motives, essential among which are those which are derived from the punishment of the wicked. And this false position is again based upon another, equally without foundation; to wit, that absolute independence is an essential attribute of moral agency;—that God cannot effectually control the determinations of moral agents, without, at the same time, destroying their moral agency. But, is this true? Does he not "work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure"?—Phil. ii. 13. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he





turneth it whithersoever he will."—Prov. xxi. 1. "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps."—Prov. xvi. 9. Was it not by "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" that Judas and the Jews betrayed and "by wicked hands" crucified and slew the Prince of life? (Acts ii. 23.) What, upon this system, mean such promises as those contained in Jeremiah xxxi. 33?—"After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." And again,—Ezekiel xi. 19,—"I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them." How, too, are we to understand the language of the beloved disciple?—"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."—1 John iii. 9, 10. If the power to sin be essential to moral agency, and it is impossible to prove that a being who can sin will not sin,—if the power of God is inadequate to prevent sin, without destroying moral agency,—how is it that the heirs of the New Jerusalem are assured that "there shall be no more curse,"—that "his servants shall serve him,"—that "they shall reign for ever and ever"?—Rev. xxii. 3, 5. Will it be said, that by means of the punishment of the wicked, resulting from sin already committed, God will have acquired a moral power to prevent the redeemed from sinning? The question recurs,—Does this take away the power to sin? If it does, is this consistent with the doctrine that "moral agents must possess the power to sin"? If it does not, what becomes of Dr. Taylor's doctrine, that "it is impossible to prove that a being who can sin will not sin"?

In short, the alternative is clear and unavoidable. Either the creatures are in all respects dependent upon God, and, in the exercise of moral agency, subject to his control, as in every thing else; or, on the contrary, Jehovah himself is the dependent being; subject to the caprice of man, in fulfilling his purposes;

and liable to be utterly defeated, by man's free will, in all his most gracious designs,—including the salvation of the seed whom he has, in covenant, promised to his eternal Son, as the reward of his sorrows and shame.

The introduction of sin was permitted by God,—not as the means of the greatest good to the greatest number; nor because he could not prevent it,—but because it so seemed good to him, whose right it is, unquestioned, to reign. Admitted, thus, by his sovereign will, it is employed, by his wisdom and goodness, as the means and occasion of revealing his own highest moral perfections. A moral agent made in God's image, is guilty of an aberration so extreme as to apostatize from and assail the very Fountain of life and being, itself. Such an action, atrocious as it is, constitutes a display of liberty and independence of will, which, however really limited and bounded, in the creature, by the Creator's power, is a most remarkable and significant proclamation of a corresponding attribute unbounded in God,—of a freedom of will, an irresponsible independence of purpose thought and action, which is absolute and entire; unlimited by any thing but himself; uncontrolled by aught but his own infinite nature. Further, the permission of sin gives occasion for the display of all those divine perfections, of holiness and wisdom, of justice and mercy, of long-suffering and wrath, which unfold themselves in harmonious action, in the history of the perdition of devils, the eternal blessedness of the elect angels, and the ruin and redemption of man. But for the occurrence of sin, Jehovah had never been known as the redeeming God; and man had never conceived an aspiration so exalted, as that of attaining to sonship to the Most High,—of joint inheritance with God's eternal Son.



having in reserve for them a most eminent place in the glory of the gospel day.

8. The remainder of the epistle is occupied with exhortations, enforcing zeal and faithfulness in Christian duties; closing with salutations to the Roman disciples.

A careful regard to this general scope and design of the apostle, is essential to a full appreciation of the argument of the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, to which we now turn.

Chapter v. 12. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

§2. Chapter v. verse 12. "As by one man." By "as" is intimated a comparison, of which but one member is here given. We shall find it resumed, and the other member stated, in the eighteenth verse. That the "one man" is Adam, appears from the fourteenth verse, and is not questioned by any. "Sin entered the world." "Sin began,—the first of the series of men's transgressions took place,"—say Stuart and Barnes. The verb *εἰσῆλθε* literally means, to gain access, by assault, or by stealth,—to enter upon adverse possession. Its nominative, *ἡ ἁμαρτία*, sin,—and not the plural, sins,—as constructed with this verb, forbids the above interpretation. Beginning with this verse, the apostle engages in an argument which is closely wrought and continuous to the close of the seventh chapter. Its design is to unfold the nature of the evil for which the gospel provides, and the adaptation of the remedy to the precise nature of the evil as thus unfolded. The origin and extent of that evil he states in the twelfth verse:—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It would seem to be unquestionable that the word, sin, here expresses whatever moral evil entered the world by Adam, of which death is the penalty. To say that there is a depravity in man's nature, which came in by Adam, is sin, and is so described in the Scriptures, and the penalty of which is death; and yet deny that it is comprehended in the word here used and the statement here made, is a mere contradiction in terms. But the manner in which the apostle proceeds to handle the subject

places the question beyond controversy. He begins by the assertion that "by one man *sin* entered into the world." This he confirms by the fact that, before and until the promulgation of the law from Sinai, "*sin* was in the world." He declares the law to have entered, (v. 20,) that the offence might abound. "But where *sin* abounded, grace did much more abound." He describes *sin* as reigning unto death, (v. 21;) asks, "Shall we continue in *sin* that grace may abound?" (ch. vi. 1;) and repels the suggestion, upon the ground that "our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of *sin* might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve *sin*," (ch. vi. 6.) Throughout the sixth and seventh chapters the whole discussion of the apostle contemplates *sin*,—that which by one man entered the world, the wages of which is death, (vi. 23,) as an indwelling principle, of which, having in the fifth chapter described the origin, he in the subsequent ones exhibits the power and evil. By the word, *sin*, therefore, the apostle unquestionably signifies that depravity of heart which, in the sequel, he describes as "enmity against God," (viii. 7,) and the consequence of which is death,—the wrath and curse of God upon the race.

To the same conclusion we are led by the manner in which the preposition *εἰς* is employed in the connection. In the New Testament there is a broad line of demarcation observable between the sense of this preposition when repeated, and when used but once. In the former case, it has the force of our English double preposition *into*; whilst, in the latter, it commonly corresponds with *on*, *to*, *at*, *by*, &c. Of this an illustration occurs in the account given by John of his own and Peter's visit to the sepulchre:—"The other disciple did outrun Peter, (*καὶ ἦλθε πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον*), and came first to the sepulchre; . . . yet went he not *in*. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, (*καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον*), and went *into* the sepulchre."—John xx. 4-6. So, in our text, whilst Paul describes death as coming to or *on* all men, (*εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἀπέλθεν*), on the other hand, of sin he says, that it came *into* the world, (*εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθε*.) Evidently, that which is thus represented by the word, *sin*, is something of which entrance *into*, and continuance in, men, is





supposable. It cannot, then, mean, a mere act, the first of a series; nor, we may add, a constructive legal attitude. In short, it designates that depravity which, upon the sin of Adam, entered into the nature of man. God made man upright. It is, therefore, a most interesting and important question, how he became depraved. The apostle tells us, "By one man, depravity—sin—entered into the world, and death by sin." By (*χρῆμα*) the world, is meant, not the material earth, the sphere of man's habitation; nor the population of the earth viewed merely as a multitude of individuals; but the race of mankind, considered as an organic whole, embraced in the person of Adam. "Sin entered."—Whilst the subject of which the apostle speaks is the depravity of the world, it is not here considered in respect to its immanent power; but its cause and origin are stated,—the depravation in which it began,—the apostasy, which embraced corruption, and plunged the race into depravity and sin.

"And death by sin."—Says Taylor of Norwich, "No man can deny or doubt that the apostle is here speaking of that death which we all die when this present life is extinguished and the body returns to the dust of the earth. He speaks of that death, evidently, which entered into the world by Adam's sin; that death which is common to all mankind, which passeth or cometh upon all men, good and bad, the righteous as well as the wicked, ver. 12; that death which reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, ver. 14. Of that death, and of no other, he speaks in the 15th verse, 'For if by the offence of one many be dead;' and in the 17th verse, 'For if by one man's offence death reigned by one.' He is still discoursing upon the same subject, and therefore, evidently, clearly and infallibly, means the same death in all these places."\* It is, indeed, very sure that in all these places the word, death, does mean the same thing. But that it does not mean, bodily dissolution, merely, is equally sure. On this point, the testimony of Taylor himself is conclusive, when, in another place, he says, "Rom. vi. 23, The wages of

\* Taylor on Original Sin. Newcastle, England, 1845, p. 18.

sin is death,' is urged as a proof that the death we now die is a punishment of sin, consequently that there must be some sin in infants, who die as well as others. But 'death,' in Rom. vi. 23, is of a nature widely different from the death we now die. For, as it stands there opposed to eternal life, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, it manifestly signifies eternal death, the second death, or that death which they shall hereafter die who live after the flesh."\* This is true; and the same principle applies to the passage before us. That the death which entered by Adam's sin is the same as that which is the wages of sin, is evident from the fact that it is the reward of sin, under process of law, (v. 13,) by judgment unto condemnation, (v. 16;) and it is contrasted with eternal life, (v. 21,) precisely as it is in chapter vi. 23, which Taylor, for this reason, admits to signify the second death:—"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord,"—v. 21. We have elsewhere seen that the word "death" is not designed to describe any of the details of the manner in which the wrath of God is inflicted, but is simply expressive of God's righteous curse against sin; and, since this curse is the cause of all the adverse providences, the afflictions and sorrows, and the dissolution of the body, which men realize, the presence of any of these is evidence of the curse, and properly described under the name of death.

This meaning of the word, death, is, in fact, essential to the whole design and argument of the apostle. As we have already stated, and as will fully appear in what follows, his object is, to show that the evil, for which the salvation of Christ is requisite, is coextensive with the race, and, hence, that one salvation is appropriate to all men, both Jews and Gentiles,—the one salvation of Christ. The evil is described as consisting of two elements: the one moral, that is, sin; the other penal, called death. What it was in which the penal evil consisted, which rendered Christ's salvation necessary, is sufficiently evinced in that which he bore. "It is written, Cursed is every

\* Ibid. Supplement, p. 183.



one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Gal. iii. 10-13.

The adverb (*οὐτως*) *so*, in the next clause, identifies the effect there described with that already stated:—"The curse came upon Adam by the apostasy, and, in so doing, came on all men." By the phrase "all men" is not only designed, in general, the whole race of man; but, particularly, Jews and Gentiles, alike; the community of whom, in the curse and in the salvation, it is Paul's object to show. *Διήλθεν*, rendered "passed," signifies to pass or go through, and always requires a medium, either expressed or understood, through which the passage takes place.\* The word occurs in the New Testament forty-three times. In thirty of these it is accompanied by a word expressive of the medium; and, in the other places, it is necessarily implied. Thus, Luke ii. 35:—"A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." Matt. xii. 43:—"The unclean spirit *passeth through* dry places." Luke viii. 22:—"Let us *go over* [the lake] to the other side of the lake." Luke v. 12:—"So much the more there *went through* [the land] a fame of him." In one place the word might, at first glance, be supposed to express motion, not through, but to, a place; but the true force of the language agrees with all the others:—Heb. iv. 14:—"We have a great high-priest that is *passed through* the [natural] heavens [to the throne of God.]"

To the question, What medium is here required?—the text gives the answer:—"Wherefore, as sin, and through sin (*ὁ θάνατος*) *death* (*εἰσῆλθε δι'*) *passed through* (*ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου*) *one man* into the world; and so [in thus doing] to all men (*ὁ θάνατος διήλθεν*) *death passed through* [the one man], in whom all sinned." The only difference between the two clauses is, that, in the latter, *διὰ* is in composition, and that the medium which it demands, (*ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου*) "the one man," having been once

\* See Guyse's Expositor, *in loco*; and Junkin on Justification, p. 130.

named, is not repeated. The interpretation here offered is confirmed by the parallel of verse 17. The phrase "to all men, death passed through the one," has its equivalent, there, in the expression, "by one man's offence death reigned through one."

In the margin of our English Bible *ἐφ' ᾧ* is rendered *in whom*, a more correct translation than the textual reading "for *3. ἐφ' ᾧ* that." It is common to recognise the authority of "in whom," the translators as definitively for the latter reading. This, however, is a mistake; as they distinctly inform us, that the insertion of marginal readings was because they were not themselves clear, and for the purpose of leaving the choice to the discretion of the judicious reader.\* By those who object to rendering *ἐφ' ᾧ*, *in whom*, it is urged that *ἐν* may not be used instead of *ἐν*, to signify *in*. But in this very chapter, an unequivocal example occurs, in v. 14:—"Those who had not sinned (*ἐν τῷ ὁμοιώματι*) *in the likeness* of Adam's transgression." Compare Rom. viii. 3:—"God sending his own Son (*ἐν ὁμοιώματι*) *in the likeness* of sinful flesh." See also the following places in which the very phrase in question occurs. Nor is this construction of *ἐν* without classical authority; as has been abundantly shown by different writers. The phrase *ἐφ' ᾧ* occurs five times in the New Testament. Mark ii. 4:—"The bed *on which* the sick of the palsy lay." Luke v. 25:—"He took up [the bed] *in which* he lay." Here the construction is precisely as in our text. The antecedent being omitted, the ellipsis must be supplied by reference to the force of the connection. 2 Cor. v. 4:—"We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; *in which*

\* "Doth not a margin do well to admonish a reader to seek further, and not to conclude or dogmatize upon this or that peremptorily? For as it is a fault of incredulity to doubt of those things that are evident, so to determine of such things as the Spirit of God hath left—even in the judgment of the judicious—questionable, can be no less than presumption. Therefore, as St. Augustine saith that variety of translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures, so diversity of signification and sense in the margin, where the text is not so clear, must needs do good, yea, is necessary, as we are persuaded. . . . They that are wise had rather have their judgments at liberty in differences of readings, than to be captivated to one when it may be the other."—*Translators' Preface to the Reader.*





[groaning] we would not be unclothed." Phil. iv. 10:—"Now at the last, ye bestir yourselves again to care for me, *in which* [caring] ye were careful before, but ye lacked opportunity." The only remaining place is Phil. iii. 12, where the construction is obscure:—"If that I may lay hold of [the prize] *unto* [the obtaining of] *which* also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus,"—is perhaps a just rendering. Or it may be read, "I follow after if that I may apprehend, because I also was apprehended of Christ Jesus." If this translation be adopted, it is the only place in which the phrase occurs as a causative particle. The construction of Luke xi. 22 will also illustrate the use of the phrase under discussion:—"He taketh from him all his armour (*ἐφ' ᾧ*) *in which* he trusted." From all these cases, it is evident that, whilst the force of the verb, *διήλθεν* *passed through*, requires the translation, *in whom*, this rendering is demanded by the analogy of the use of the phrase itself in other places.

The parallel language of this same apostle in 1 Cor. xv. 22, on the same subject, confirms our interpretation, as it shows the light in which the subject was viewed by Paul:—"As (*ἐν τῇ Ἀδὰμ*) *in Adam* all die." The sentiment of Paul in the place under consideration would not be changed, were we to substitute this phrase and read, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so in Adam all die, in whom all sinned." In fact, so conclusive is the evidence in its favour, that this interpretation is admitted by Whitby and other Arminians.

"In whom all have sinned."—The original is free from the ambiguity which the auxiliary "have" gives to the place, by which colour is afforded to the pretence that the apostle speaks of sins personally committed by Adam's posterity. The word (*ἡμᾶρ*) sinned, is in the aorist, expressing action indefinitely past and completed. "To all men death passed through the one in whom all sinned." Such is the assertion of the apostle:—"By one man sin entered into the world, and in him all sinned." If the entrance of sin was the embrace of depravity, this language is also to be understood in the same sense. When Adam apostatized from God, all his race, being in him as the branches are in the undeveloped shoot, apostatized with him, and so became corrupt and accursed. They are condemned under death as sinners,

because they are such. They sinned. That such was the case, the apostle proceeds to show in the following verses.

Ver. 13.—"For until the law, sin was in the world. But sin is not imputed when there is no law."—Prior to the giving of the law on Sinai there was sin, as well as after. It is, by 13, 14, some, assumed from this scripture, that there were no sins imputed until the coming in of the law of Moses. But directly the opposite of this is the apostle's argument. He declares, in the next verse, that "death reigned from Adam to Moses." He assumes the fact, which in the close of the next chapter is stated in terms, that death is the wages of sin. Where, therefore, there is death, there must be sin. And, since there was death all the time from Adam "until the law" given by the hand of Moses on Sinai, it follows, as already asserted, that "sin was in the world." But sin is the transgression of law; and hence there can be no such thing as sin where there is no law; and therefore no dealing as for sin. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." Since, then, there was death, and therefore sin, prior to that revelation in which the Jews boasted as "the law," it follows that there must have been a law in existence before that of Sinai, a law under which sin and death entered the world, and gained dominion over all men, both Gentiles and Jews alike. What law that was, Paul had already stated:—"Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written on their hearts."—Rom. ii. 14, 15. Throughout the entire argument Paul carefully distinguishes two features which were essentially united in Adam's apostasy. The one is, the violation of the positive precept, which he designates as "the offence," "the disobedience," and "the transgression." The other is, the violation of the law written in Adam's heart, and so, in the nature of the race, and by the offence transgressed in both. Its violation was the embrace of that which the apostle calls, sin. The law, therefore, under which sin and death reigned from Adam to Moses,—the





law under which sin entered into the world and death by sin passed to all men, is "the law written in their heart." Inscribed, as we have elsewhere seen, in the heart of Adam, and, in him, written in the nature of man, its power is seen in the struggles of those who "do by nature the things contained in the law," and its violation by Adam, and in him by the race, is the cause of the universal prevalence of sin and death. Hence, the law of Moses cannot have been otherwise than subsidiary to the other; and satisfaction to the former, even if rendered, could not meet the claims nor set aside the authority of that law which is common to the race, the curse of which rests upon all alike. Therefore, the necessity and the provision of a remedy, not for the Jew only, but for the race. The fact of the actual imputation of sin, prior to Moses, is evident from such examples as that of Cain, at whose door, according to the testimony of God, sin lay, (Gen. iv. 7);—the old world, whose wickedness God saw that it was great, inasmuch that for it they were destroyed, (Gen. vi. 5-7;);—the cities of the plain, (Gen. xix. 13;);—and the Amorites of Canaan. (Gen. xv. 16.)

Ver. 14.—"Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."—"Nevertheless:"—Although it is true that there can be no sin, and therefore no curse, when there is no law, yet the curse was realized; "death reigned." Not only did men die, but that under righteous sentence; for death came not in by usurpation and violence; but, enthroned by the law, he wielded its sceptre, and reigned by right. "Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." By Augustine, and perhaps the great majority of judicious expositors after him, this is referred to infants; upon the supposition that the immediate contrast is between actual transgression, and innate sin. Calvin and others, however, suppose the contrast to be between transgressors of a positive precept, as was Adam, and those who have no law but that written on the heart. We prefer the former interpretation; because, though the apostle had emphatically mentioned the transgression of Adam, as an actual sin,

and afterwards insists much on it as such, he does not, in any place either before or after, lay any stress upon, or even mention, the fact that it was transgression of a positive, as contradistinguished from a moral or innate precept. Infants undoubtedly died, as well as others; and are therefore necessarily included in the inference which he draws from the prevalence of death. All the natural offspring of Adam are, by the whole tenor of the argument, and its repeated and express declarations, held to have become condemned sinners, by virtue of his transgression. If this be true of any one, it is as appropriate to infants as to any others. If infants are excepted from a place in the offence and condemnation, they are by that process excluded from a place in the benefits of the redemption. It has been provided as a remedy for the case of those only who were ruined in Adam. Whilst, however, for these reasons the Augustinian interpretation is to be preferred, the other involves in it every conclusion, concerning original sin, contained in the former. The apostle reasons that, since death is the punishment of sin, under the sanctions of law, it follows, that those who die, are sinners against law; even though they may not have a positive precept revealed to them;—they are sinners against the law written on their hearts. But, if this be sound reasoning, the conclusion that follows must be as broad as the premises laid.—Whosoever dies, he dies under the sentence of the law for sin.—He is then a sinner,—even though he have never known the written law; he has been condemned by law, even that in his own heart.—Infants die; therefore they are sinners; although the written law has never come to them. "Adam,—who is the figure of him that was to come." Adam was, then, a figure or type of Christ. The word, (*τύπος*), *figure*, means "that which exhibits a representation of any thing." Thus, Heb. viii. 5:—"See that thou make all things according to the *pattern* showed thee in the mount." Elsewhere, in the same connection, the word is translated, "the fashion."—Acts vii. 44. Evidently, it here has respect to Christ's representative office; of which Adam's relation to his seed was a type; or likeness.

Ver. 15.—"But not as the offence, so also is the free gift."—By



"the offence," Paul designates the eating of the forbidden fruit, § 8. Verres —the formal action, in which the sin, the apostasy, 15-17. lay concealed. On the other hand, by "the free gift," he points to the righteousness of Christ; which, as a gratuity of divine goodness, is, without price, (v. 17,) bestowed on the unworthy. "Not as the offence, so also."—Adam was indeed a type of Christ; yet is not the work of the latter to be measured by Adam's scale. The apostle specifies several points of difference. 1. One is intimated by the structure of the sentence. In order to a perfect parallel, the apostle should have said, "Not as the offence, so is the obedience;" or, "Not as the penal liability for the offence, so is the free gift of the righteousness." But, instead of either of these forms of expression, the Holy Ghost prefers to say, "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift." Thus is intimated a difference between the nature of our relation to the offence of Adam and to the righteousness of Christ. The offence is ours immediately, and not by virtue of any divine agency investing us with it. As the apostle has already shown, that, when Adam sinned, all his seed were in him, and so sinned in the same act with him,—and that, in the fact of his disobedience, sin entered into all men, bringing them under bondage to death; so, now, he assumes the reality of these postulates; and, as a consequence, recognises the offence as the disobedience of all,—as natively belonging to, and immediately chargeable upon, all. It is only because truly and immediately ours, that a God of infinite goodness and justice charges it to us. But, on the other hand, grace bestows a righteousness, to which we hold no such native relation,—a righteousness in which we have no original property; and to which we could never have acquired any, had it not, contrary to nature, been made ours by free gift. "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift." Says Calvin, "Adam's sin does not condemn us, by a bare imputation, as though the punishment of another's sin were exacted of us; but we therefore endure its punishment because we are also guilty of the crime, since our nature, vitiated in him, is held guilty of iniquity by God. But Christ's righteousness restores to salvation by another method; for it is not accepted of God,

because it is intrinsically in us; but the bounty of the Father makes us possess Christ himself, who is bestowed upon us with all his blessings."\* Calvin indeed states this, as a point of difference not mentioned by Paul. But although not formally set forth, it is very clearly intimated, in the phraseology of the apostle; and assumed as self-evident, in his argument. 2. The second point of difference stated by the apostle is this:—If Adam was invested with an extraordinary authority and influence, such as to ruin a world,—much greater, more amazing, and infinitely glorious, is that of the second Adam, by which the world thus lost is restored. It is a comparatively easy thing to destroy a noble structure. To restore it is a far more signal display of power. "If through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Christ Jesus, hath abounded unto many." 3. It is very easy to see how one sin is sufficient to destroy all righteousness. But in Christ the apparent contradictory of this is exhibited,—a righteousness which no amount of sin can destroy,—which covers not only the one offence in which sin entered, but the many in which it abounds. "Not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification." 4. Adam placed the sceptre in the hand of death, and cast down his race as bond-slaves to that terrible king. Christ rejoices to show his power, not in the enthronement, but destruction, of death, and the crowning of the victims, who lay in chains beneath his iron sceptre. By the power of the second Adam, the prisoners of death reign, kings, in life. "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."

The apostle now returns to the comparison which he had intimated in the twelfth verse by the adverb "as," but § 8. Verres left unfinished. "As by one man sin entered into 18, 19. the world, and death by sin, and so to all men death passed

\* Calvin on the Romans, chap. v. 17.





through the one in whom all sinned,"—as "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;" that is, "justification which is the pledge of eternal life." Of this he proceeds to give the reason and ground.

Ver. 19.—"For as by one man's disobedience many [to wit, all his natural posterity] were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many [that is, all his seed] be made righteous," being endowed with his righteousness. Having, in the preceding verse, stated the fact of condemnation in Adam, and justification in the second Adam, he here states the grounds of these proceedings. We are condemned in Adam because of our communion in his apostasy; justified in Christ by communion in his righteousness. The communion in Adam's sin, of which Paul here speaks, does not consist in the actings of depravity in his seed, severally,—by which, as some pretend, they assume responsibility for his apostasy,—but in that relation to, and inhering in him, by virtue of which the apostasy was not only his sin individually, but theirs also. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," inasmuch as "in him all sinned." "Even so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." As Adam's sin, so the righteousness of Christ, is to be viewed in several lights. First, and chiefly, it is a controlling principle, which, dwelling in the man Christ Jesus, constituted his essential righteousness,—that by which he was the express image of the Father's person. The Holy Spirit was the efficient cause of this principle in Christ; the power of which produced that perfect conformity to the law, in which his active righteousness consisted. By their union with Christ through the Spirit, his people are admitted to share in his property in this his righteousness,—as, in him, it was both essentially and actively a conformity to the law; and so justifies those to whom it is given;—whilst, at the same time, the uniting Spirit acts as a controlling principle of conformity, which sanctifies those in whom he dwells;—an incorruptible seed that abideth in them, so that they cannot sin. When, therefore, Paul says that by the

obedience of one many shall be made righteous, we are not to suppose that he meant any thing else than precisely what he says. He is not to be understood as confounding the righteousness which justifies with the judicial decision by which it is recognised to justification. In fact, if we will listen to the apostle, it would seem that nothing could be more perspicuous and perfectly intelligible than his language. His object is to show how a sinner can be justified. In general terms, he says it resembles the manner of our condemnation in Adam:—"As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." But this is not sufficient to elucidate the matter. The sentence of the law, whether condemnatory or justifying, must have some real ground; since the judgment of God is according to truth. What, then, is the ground of the decisions here stated? The apostle replies, The condemnation is of sinners, for sin. The justification is of righteous ones, for righteousness. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. And although the righteousness in which they are justified is one infinitely above their power to work for themselves, it is as truly and fully theirs, for justification, as though of their own working. The free gift is not a pretence, but a reality. The righteousness which it bestows is by it made truly theirs; and hence, righteous in it, they cannot but be justified at the bar of holiness and truth.

Thus far, Paul has considered the sin of Adam simply as the apostasy which involved him, and, in him, the world, in condemnation. He now hints that it is to be viewed not only as a sin common to all, but as embracing a principle of active opposition to God, working in the hearts of all. The Jews looked to the law as a rule of righteousness, by which they must be saved. So far from this being true, says the apostle, "the law entered, that the offence might abound," (v. 20.)—that the disobedience of Adam might be re-enacted in the many actual transgressions of his sons. In the mass of men, depravity operates to induce a love of darkness,—an embrace



of ignorance,—the effect of which is, comparative unconsciousness of sin. To prevent this, and the apathy consequent on it, the law was given on Sinai. By its strict requirements irritating the depravity of the heart, and by its strait rule detecting its perverseness, it convinces of sin, and cuts off from legal hopes. It entered, “that the offence might abound,”—that the depravity of heart which came in by Adam’s apostasy, might be discovered, and condemned, through the outward transgressions induced thereby. “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” The manner of the recurrence of the word “sin” here interchanged with “the offence,” intimates that the actual sins which, after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, men commit, have their spring in the depravity which came in by his offence, and are witnesses to it. They are the effects of its growing power; each act of transgression giving new proof of the energy of corruption, and its growing energy inducing new deeds of disobedience. It was among the Jews that the law thus caused sin to abound; and among them grace much more abounded, by the coming of Christ, of the seed of Abraham; and by his righteousness, wrought in obedience to that very law of Moses, by which sin was made to abound; “that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Thus not only does the salvation of Christ provide deliverance from the curse of the apostasy, but from that of the depravity and open disobedience, thence flowing, in the whole race of man. Where sin and death have held their dark dominion, there grace has erected her radiant throne; and, leaning on the arm of righteousness,—that righteousness which is God’s free gift to the sinner,—shall reign over an innumerable throng, endowing them with eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the argument of the apostle thus far considered, the following points are to be noticed as bearing on the subject of original

sin; viz. :—

§ 8. Doctrine  
of this passage.

1. It designates the author of the sin as the one man, Adam, acting as head of the race, the imper-sonation of (*χόσμος*) the world.

2. That of which he was the author and originator is not, sins, in the plural, but “sin;” and the action in which it originated was “the offence,” “the offence of one,” “one offence;”—and that one as contradistinguished from the “many offences” of actual transgressions. The matter, then, of the apostle’s discussion, is that depravity or sin which, by the one offence, entered the world,—the effect of the apostasy of our first parents from holiness and God. “Eve is not named,” says Van Mastricht, “because the Hebrews were not accustomed to count their genealogies through females; because Adam was constituted the parent and head of the human race by God; because, although at length made husband and wife, they were still constituted but one public person; it may be added, because Eve was made out of Adam, and dependent on him.”\*

3. The sin of the one is predicated of all, because all were in that one:—“That one in whom all sinned.” This conclusion is not vitiated were we to admit the other reading,—“for that all sinned.” Still would the statement of the apostle remain,—that when and where Adam sinned, there and then all sinned; and, when death passed in upon him, it at the same time passed through him to all, *because* all sinned. “In Adam all die.”—1 Cor. xv. 22. Does the penalty, death, precede the sin? Or, will not the testimony of the apostle be admitted, that they so die, because in him they sinned?

4. The effect of this community in the one offence, is, that all men are in it sinners. “By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners,” “all sinned.” It is not of personal sins—of actual transgressions—that the apostle here speaks. But it is a sin which accounts for the universality of death over all, infants included,—a sin antedating and accounting for the death which in Adam all die,—and can, therefore, be no other than that one offence, the apostasy, in which in Adam all sinned.

5. The consequences which the apostle states, as resulting from this universal, all-embracing sin, are, judicial condemnation and penal death: condemnation, not for other sins, but for

\* Van Mastricht, Lib. iv. ii. 2.





this; and death, even to those who have not committed any other. "The judgment was by one offence to condemnation." "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "Through the offence of one, many be dead." "By one man's offence death reigned by one man."

6. The sin which is thus by the apostle exhibited as the one offence in which all men sinned, and are condemned, in Adam, he also presents as in all men a principle of evil, bringing forth deeds of sin. "The offence abounds" in actual sins,—the same offence which is the cause of condemnation to Adam and the race. The offence was apostasy. The attitude thereby assumed was enmity. The effect of the enmity is actual transgressions.

7. The fundamental principle,—the pivot on which the whole argument of the apostle turns is, that "death is the wages of sin," (ch. vi. 23),—the penalty annexed by the law to transgression. Hence the statement of the twelfth verse, that death entered the world by sin; and of the fourteenth, that death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; a fact which in the fifteenth verse he assumes to have proved the universality of the offence. Hence the declaration (verse seventeenth) that by one man's offence death reigned by one,—an offence by which the next verse declares condemnation to have come upon all men. Hence, too, the contrast of the twenty-first verse:—"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus, assuming that wherever there is death there is sin, the apostle thereby finds all men to be sinners; and, in so doing, shows the propriety of a salvation common to all men. In the "all" thus ascertained and defined, no line of argument can justly except infants. And, if it were possible so to do, it would at once involve their exclusion from a part in the salvation of Christ; which, by the whole course of reasoning here employed, is proclaimed as embracing none who are not embraced in the offence. It is for the offence, and to the offenders, that it provides a remedy.

The Scriptures leave no room for difficulty in ascertaining what Paul means by all men being in Adam. In this connection,

it is stated as, in many respects, parallel to the inbeing of the regenerate in Christ. "To all men death passed through the one in whom all sinned." "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."—v. 18. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."—Ch. viii. 1. Such is the parallel. As there is condemnation to all who are in Adam; so, there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ. Here two things are to be observed. The first is, that, as must be admitted, the case of our condemnation in Adam is cited, with express design to illustrate how we are justified in Christ. "As by one man condemnation, so by one man justification." Or, as the apostle elsewhere says, "As in Adam all die, even so in Jesus Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. xv. 22. The second is, that, by being "in Christ," is unquestionably meant, a substantial, and not a merely constructive, relation to him. "To be in Christ Jesus signifies to be intimately united to him in the way in which the Scriptures teach us this union is effected; viz., by having his Spirit dwelling in us.—Rom. viii. 9. The phrase is never used for a merely external or nominal union. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.'—2 Cor. v. 17. See John xv. 4, &c.; 1 John ii. 5, iii. 6."\* In the new birth, "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," "the body of Christ."—1 Cor. xii. 13, 27. The conclusion is therefore inevitable, that, as inbeing in Christ is expressive of a real oneness, wrought by the communication of the Holy Spirit, the incorruptible seed, imparting a new life and nature; so, inbeing in Adam, by which the other is illustrated and set forth by Paul, expresses a real union with him, consequent upon the generative derivation of life and nature from him. That such is the meaning of Paul, is further evident, from the fact that inbeing is the established scriptural phrase expressive of the relation of the child to the father:—"Levi paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him."—Hob. vii. 9, 10. Compare Gen.

\* Hodge on the Romans, ch. viii. 1; 12mo, 1858, p. 181.





xv. 4, xxiv. 11; 2 Kings xx. 18; Isa. li. 1. To the same effect are such expressions as that in Job:—"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?"—Job xiv. 4.

Paul, stating that Adam was the type of Christ, runs a parallel between them; the main features of which are readily traced. The first is, that as Adam's seed were in him, in a relation real and substantial, so the seed of Christ are in him, in a manner equally real and close. The second point is, that as, by virtue of our inbeing in Adam, we hold such a relation to his sin as to be for it justly condemned under the curse,—so, believers are, by virtue of union with Christ, invested with such a property in his righteousness that in it they are justified. Here, however, occurs a point of difference, intimated, as we have seen, by the form of expression which is used by the apostle. The sin of Adam, by which we are brought under condemnation, is ours originally, natively and intrinsically; because we were in and of the sinning head, in the transgression; and the nature which we inherit and originally possess is the very nature by which the apostasy was wrought. Hence, the offence is immediately and natively ours; and therefore is charged upon us. As attributed to us, it is "the offence." But the righteousness in which we are justified is extrinsic and foreign to our nature. We were so far from being natively in its author, when he wrought it, that our native position toward him is that of alienation and antagonism. And it is only by factitious means,—by renewing influences, superimposed upon our nature,—that we are brought into a relation of membership in him. The righteousness, therefore, of which we become possessed, by union with Christ, is not ours in any such sense as though we had a part in the merit of working it; but only, as the robe wrought by Christ and bestowed by his grace, covers the nakedness of all his members. It is ours only as "the free gift." This difference between the nature of our relation to Adam and to Christ is emphasized by the apostle, in another place, as we shall presently see, by representing believers as native branches of the wild olive-tree, which are grafted contrary to nature into the good olive.

The only other point which we shall now specify, in which

the parallel between Adam and Christ holds, is brought out more particularly in the following chapters of the epistle, to which attention will next be given. It is, that,—as the nature which we derive from Adam not only involves us in the guilt and condemnation of his apostasy, but remains in us an active principle of sin, working unholiness and transgression,—so, the Holy Spirit, uniting us to Christ, not only gives us a title in his justifying righteousness, but constitutes a principle of holiness, operating within, to the utter destruction of sin. This is the whole burden of the 6th and 7th chapters; and is the key to that expression which is used in the 6th verse of the 6th chapter:—"Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." This form of expression is familiar to Paul as indicating that corrupt nature which we derive from Adam, the fruits of which are transgression and death. Thus, he exhorts the Ephesians, that they "put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; . . . and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 22-24. So, he says to the Colossians, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."—Col. iii. 9, 10. The argument of Paul on the subject of the resurrection gives occasion to a series of passages, in which the same parallel between the first and second Adam is pointedly announced, and much light thrown on the other places already quoted. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming."—1 Cor. xv. 21-23. Again, with a vigour of expression which recognises the existence of but two men on earth,—"the first man" and "the second," of one or other of whom the rest of the world are but particular members,—he says that "the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. . . . The first



man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."—v. 45-48.

This doctrine of the oneness of the race, in Adam, and of believers, in Christ, is brought out by the apostle, again and again, in the sequel of this epistle. In the ninth chapter, vindicating the sovereignty of God, which is signalized in the election of some and the rejection of others, irrespective of nation or family, he describes the whole race as one mass or lump of corrupt material; from which God, as he sees good, makes vessels of mercy and of wrath:—"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another vessel unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory; even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"—Rom. ix. 21-24. Here, the human family is represented as a unit,—a lump, all depraved,—out of which each individual is brought into several existence, and either left to the depravity characteristic of the lump, and the perdition appropriate to it; or, in the display of the riches of God's infinitely glorious grace, prepared unto glory, as a vessel of mercy.

Again, in the eleventh chapter, in exhibiting the principles of God's dealings in rejecting Israel and calling in the Gentiles, the apostle pursues a line of argument and illustration which still more clearly sets forth our doctrine:—

Ver. 15. "If the casting away of them [that is, the Jews] be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? <sup>16</sup> For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. <sup>17</sup> And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; <sup>18</sup> Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not

the root, but the root thee. <sup>19</sup> Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. <sup>20</sup> Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: <sup>21</sup> For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. <sup>22</sup> Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. <sup>23</sup> And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graff them in again. <sup>24</sup> For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree."

The comparison employed in the first clause of the 16th verse has allusion to that feature of the Mosaic institutions which is thus stated in Num. xv. 20, 21:—"Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough for a heave-offering: as ye do the heave-offering of the threshing-floor, so shall ye heave it. Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the Lord a heave-offering in your generations." See Lev. xxiii. 14-20. Thus, the first portion of bread or dough, dedicated to God, hallowed the whole lump. So the patriarchs, being holy to God, constituted their seed his people. God claimed them as his; and would ultimately vindicate the claim by recalling them from their apostasy, and restoring to them the privileges of his people. "And if the root be holy, so are the branches." The same idea is here more fully expressed. If the fathers, the root of the stock of Israel, were in covenant with God, and, as such, his people; their seed, springing from and being in them, as branches in the root, are therefore his also.

In the next verse, and those following, the apostle still further expands his illustration and extends its application. Under the figure of the good olive-tree, he represents the whole church of God,—of which each particular believer is a branch,—all possessing one root, one life, and fatness, and fruit. On the other hand, the wild olive represents the human family, of





which Adam is the root, from whom it derives its vital principle, its alien nature and corrupt and poisonous fruit. Here it may be objected, that by the root of the good olive-tree is meant Abraham, and by the branches, the people of God, considered as his seed. This is true, but not the whole truth. Says Henry, "The root of this tree was Abraham; not the root of communication; so, Christ only is the root; but the root of administration; he being the first with whom the covenant was so solemnly made." The apostle is not in this place considering so much the relation of the church immediately to Christ, as to the privileges and promises bestowed upon Abraham. Yet the other is not left out of view, but is fundamental to the whole case. The principle of unity—that by which all the branches have community in the root and fatness of the tree—is certainly not the seed of Abraham, but the Spirit of Christ; and the people of God have Abraham for their father only as he was a type of Christ, to whom, in him, the promise that he should be heir of the world was made, as the apostle elsewhere declares. (Gal. iii. 19.) That such is the design of the apostle, is conclusively demonstrated by the whole course of argument which he adopts on the subject in the third chapter of the epistle to the Galatians:—"7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. . . . 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but, as of one, And to thy seed; which is Christ. . . . 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come, to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. . . . 26 Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be

Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Unquestionably, then, Christ himself is the essential root of the good olive, from whom life and fatness flow to all the branches, and in whom they "are all one." And to this is parallel the wild olive, of which Adam is the root, in whom all his seed are one, according to the decree of creation:—"Let us make man, and let them have dominion,"—Gen. i. 26; and the statement of Paul:—"God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."—Acts xvii. 26. "The human family is not only one blood, but the blood of Adam is that one blood."\*

Thus everywhere does the apostle hold up the two cases of our apostasy, condemnation and death in Adam, and our recovery, justification and life in Christ, as parallel to and mutually illustrating each other. The conclusion, therefore, is unavoidable, that we are guilty in Adam in a way similar to that in which we are justified in Christ, with only this difference: that in the former case the relation is one native and intrinsic, and therefore involves us in the crime and condemnation by an immediate judgment proper to us; in the other, the relation is supernatural and by free gift, and therefore the sentence of justification is by grace. "But that," says Calvin, "is well known to be accomplished, only when Christ, by a wonderful communication, transfuses into us the virtue of his righteousness, as it is elsewhere said, 'The Spirit is life because of righteousness.'"†

The view here taken of the design and meaning of the language of Paul, is strenuously controverted by a distinguished divine and expositor of our own church. Dr. Hodge, in his commentary on the epistle to the Romans, enumerates three interpretations as the leading ones upon the passage in question. "1. Many of the older and also of the more modern commentators, understand *sin* here to mean corruption. . . . 2. Others take the word *sin* in its ordinary sense, and understand the passage as teaching, either that Adam was the cause or occasion of all men committing sin, or that sin commenced with him. . . . 3.

\* Breckinridge's Knowledge of God Objectively Considered, p. 487.

† Calvin's Institutes, Book II. i. 6.



Others again understand the declaration, that through Adam sin entered into the world, (*i.e.* that through him all men became sinners,) to mean that on his account they were regarded and treated as sinners." Of these interpretations, the first is that which is common to the Reformed writers. It is, however, misapprehended by Dr. Hodge, as we shall hereafter see. The second is that of Pelagius and his followers. The third is adopted by Professor Hodge. "The third interpretation, according to which the words in question mean, 'all men are regarded and treated as sinners,' is to be preferred. The verse then contains this idea:—'As by one man all men became sinners and exposed to death, and thus death passed on all men, since all sinned,—*i.e.* are regarded as sinners on his account,—even so by one man,' &c.\*"

It is with deference that we venture to controvert the exposition of this esteemed and distinguished commentator and divine. In taking such a position, however, we are fortified by the almost unanimous concurrence of the standard writers of the Reformed church, who harmonize with our interpretation of Paul. Dr. Hodge's exposition seems to us inconsistent alike with the grammatical structure and sense of the passage, and with the scope and design of the apostle.

The statement of Paul is that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so to all men death passed through the one in whom all sinned." According to Dr. Hodge, "the verse contains this idea:—'As by one man all men became sinners and exposed to death, and thus death passed on all men, since all sinned,—*i.e.* are regarded and treated as sinners on his account,—even so by one man,' &c." Our objection to this statement, as an interpretation or exposition of the language of the apostle, is precisely the same which the respected expositor has expressed, with admirable clearness in a somewhat parallel case:—"The two expressions, or declarations, 'I adopt the system of doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith,' and 'I adopt that system for substance of doctrine,' are not identical. The one therefore cannot be substituted

\* Hodge on the Romans, pp. 116, 118.

for the other. If there were no other difference between them, it is enough that the one is definite and univocal, the other is both vague and equivocal."\* The language of Paul, in question, is remarkable for its simplicity and directness,—the absence of any thing like vague, figurative or ambiguous expressions,—the distinct demarcation, and logical connection, of the successive clauses of the argument,—and the abundant light shed upon it, by the amplifications and analogy, which are unfolded in the rest of the chapter. The first proposition stated, is, that "by one man sin entered into the world." Here, by the noun, sin, it can scarcely be questioned, is meant something real, of which entrance into the world is predicable. Whatever it was, it entered,—entered by one man; and brought death in its train,—"death by sin." Dr. Hodge here states that by, sin, many understand, corruption; and asserts that, according to this interpretation, the passage means that "as by one man corruption of nature was introduced into the world, and death as its consequence, and so death passed on all men, because all have become corrupt," &c. To this he urges several objections,—all based, as we conceive, in a misapprehension. Taking the word, sin, to signify corruption, the corresponding interpretation of the passage is this:—"As by one man corruption entered the world, and death by corruption, and so to all men death passed through the one in whom all embraced corruption." The phrase, "all sinned," expresses not merely the occurrence of a state,—the becoming corrupt,—but active and responsible entrance on it. If, sin, mean corruption, then the corresponding sense of the verb, to sin, must be, to act corruptly; and in the present case it is clearly defined to be the initial action,—the embrace of it. And such was the interpretation given by the Reformed writers. Says Witsius, "It is very clear to any not bewitched with prejudice, that when the apostle affirms, that, 'all have sinned,' he speaks of an act of sinning, or of an actual sin; the very term, to sin, denoting an action. 'Tis one thing, to sin; another, to be sinful; if I may so speak."† This interpretation is open to none of the exceptions

\* Princeton Review, 1856, vol. xxx. p. 672.

† Witsius on the Covenants, book i. viii. 81.





stated by our expositor. Its only defect arises from the fact, that the word, "corruption," is not comprehensive enough to be an adequate synonym for, sin. Nor is there any in our language; signifying, as does that word, every thing that is of the nature of moral evil. Disobedience, unrighteousness, transgression, unlawfulness, unholiness, apostasy, corruption, depravity,—all are expressed in that one little monosyllable. And in fact the Reformed expositors do not confine themselves to any one of these words; but freely use them all; not as expressive of different things, but of the several aspects of the one moral evil, sin. That such is the sense of the word, we have already seen the evidence. It is worthy of remark, that Dr. Hodge, after stating and rejecting the definitions of others, fails to propose one himself:—"Many of the older and also of the more modern commentators understand, sin, here to mean corruption. This clause would then mean—'By one man all men became corrupt.' Others take the word, sin, in its ordinary sense, and understand the passage as teaching, either, that Adam was the cause or occasion of all men committing sin, or, that sin commenced with him; he was the first sinner. Others again understand the declaration that through Adam sin entered the world, (i.e. that through him all men became sinners,) to mean that on his account they were regarded and treated as sinners."\* Adopting the latter view, he entirely neglects to show how it is reconcilable with the language of the apostle, or reducible to the terms of his statement, or how, in accordance with it, the word, sin, is to be understood. "By one man . . . entered into the world." With what, according to this exposition, is the blank to be filled? In support of the position that the phrase, "all sinned," means merely that all men were regarded and treated as sinners, Dr. Hodge appeals to the language of Judah respecting Benjamin:—"If I bring him not unto thee, I shall bear the blame;"—literally, "I shall have sinned to thee;"—Gen. xliii. 9, xlv. 32; and that of Bathsheba:—"I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders;"—literally, "will be sinners."—1 Kings i. 21. These places will be fully considered hereafter. We will only here

\* Hodge on the Romans, p. 116.

use the argument of Witsius on the subject:—"A sinner,' or even 'sin,' and 'to sin,' are different things." To establish the position of the professor, it is necessary not only to show that *one* of these phrases *may* be understood in the sense given by him, but that all of them *must* be so interpreted. It must be made to appear that, although the Spirit of God asserts sin to have entered,—men thus to have become sinners,—death to be the wages of sin, and to have entered by it,—death to have passed upon all men, through the one in whom all sinned; or, because all sinned,—and sin to reign by nature in all; yet in all this, there is no real depravity, no sin, contemplated in the case. To admit that the word, sin, in the twelfth verse, means real sin, involves several pregnant conclusions, which the professor rejects. The sin, described in that verse, is represented as a something which entered into the world or race of man, and which is the cause of death coextensive with the race. If then it is real sin, in its origin, it is the real sin of the race. Not only so; but, the word being allowed to mean real sin, its derivatives, used as they are in intimate connection with it, must be understood in a corresponding sense. A sinner, must then be one in whom real sin is; and, to sin, must mean, to enact real sin.

But let us look a little more closely. "On account of Adam's sin, we are regarded and treated as sinners." Regarded as sinners, by whom? By the all-seeing, the all-wise, the ever true and gracious God. Here, then, the question presents itself,—Is the light in which God thus regards us, the true light? If the answer be in the affirmative, the question is settled. We are, then, sinners, really and truly; and, therefore, so treated by God. If this alternative be denied,—if it be assumed that we are not truly sinners in Adam's sin,—we are shut up to the atheistic conclusion, that the divine judgment is not according to truth. Whilst thus the regarding us as sinners, involves the question of God's infallible knowledge, and the truth of his estimates, the treatment of us as sinners raises an issue of equal directness in regard to other attributes. The declarative righteousness and justice of God can consist in nothing else, than his treating his accountable





creatures according to fact and truth. Says Abraham, "That be far from thee, to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"—Gen. xviii. 25. If, then, God treats us as sinners, there is but one alternative,—either to impeach his justice, or to confess that we are sinners.

There is an apparent incompatibility in the various statements of the respected expositor, which makes it difficult to determine the precise sense in which he is to be understood. "All men are regarded and treated as sinners." Such is his interpretation of Paul. But what does it mean? Does God really consider all men as, in Adam's sin, transgressors and criminals? Are they looked upon as partakers in the moral enormity of his deed? Does its turpitude attach to them? This, Dr. Hodge strenuously denies. "There is no transfer of the moral turpitude of Adam's sin to his descendants." His sin "is not properly the sin of all men," and God does not so consider it. What, then, is meant by God regarding them as sinners? How are we to understand the language thus employed? What more does it mean, than that they are so treated?

It may be said, that the Lord Jesus Christ was regarded and treated as a sinner. To this proposition, however, we most emphatically except. He was regarded and treated no otherwise, than as being precisely what he was, the Father's spotless Son, the spontaneous substitute, the vicarious sacrifice for sinners. But, that he was regarded and treated by the Father as a sinner,—NEVER! So far the reverse, that, whilst fulfilling his atoning work, he had the repeated attestation of the Father, that he was the beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. In Gethsemane itself, heavenly messengers manifested the Father's love. True, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." But an essential feature in the case, the grand causative element in its glorious character, was his recognised innocence; "because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth."—Isa. liii. 9.

But is it not said that the Lord "made him to be sin for us"?—2 Cor. v. 21. True; nor is there any difficulty in ascertain-

ing the meaning of the phrase. The expression is the constantly accepted phrase employed in the Mosaic law, to indicate the devoting of a thing as a vicarious atoning sacrifice for sin. Thus, Lev. iv. 25:—"The priest shall take *ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ τῆς ἁμαρτίας* of the blood of the sin." Lev. v. 9:—"He shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar; for *(αἷμα ἁμαρτίας)* it is sin." See also Lev. iv. 3, 29, v. 12, viii. 2; Psalm xl. 7; Ezek. xliii. 22, 25, xlv. 29, xlv. 22, 23, 25, &c. Thus does the apostle use the very same expression in regard to Christ, and in the same sense, which the Spirit of God habitually uses, when he says of the sacrificial sin offering, "It is sin." "Him who knew no sin he hath made to be a sin-offering for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." An undue stress is sometimes put upon the antithesis which is apparent in the text. The correspondence between the two members of the sentence, is not at all so strong in the original, as in the translation. The language of the apostle is, that "him who knew no sin (*ἐποίησεν*) he hath made sin for us, that (*γινώμεθα*) we might become the righteousness of God in him." The phraseology of the former clause is expressive of that efficient action, by which God gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. That of the latter indicates entrance upon a state, the acquisition of a new life of holiness by virtue of inbeing in Christ; as the apostle has previously testified, that, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."—v. 17. There is nothing in the whole connection to require the phrase in question to be interpreted in any other than its well-known and established sense:—"He hath made him to be a sin-offering." The expression being sacerdotal, in its idiomatic use,—familiar to Paul, as such, in the Old Testament Scriptures, from which he continually derives his illustrations respecting the person and work of Christ,—and used by him in reference to Christ's sacrificial work,—it is unreasonable to suppose, without necessity, that he would depart from the accepted meaning. "Paul, viewing Christ according to the common and received mode of speaking, here represents him as having been



made sin; not because he was accounted a sinner by men, which some injudiciously suppose; for here the subject is respecting God's tribunal, and not men's;—nor because he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, as Paul elsewhere says,—Rom. viii. 3; as supposed by others; for this is too weak to correspond with the vigour of Paul's expression; for it is one thing to bear the likeness of sinful flesh, another to be made sin;—but because he bore all the punishment of sin, imposed upon him as an expiatory victim, so that by the sweet-smelling sacrifice of the cross he might satisfy the Most High and purge our sins.\* Owen, objecting to this interpretation, asserts that the authors of the Septuagint “render *ἁμαρτία* constantly by *ἁμαρτία*, where it signifies, sin; where it denotes, an offering for sin, and they retain that word, they do it by *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, an elliptical expression, which they invented for that which they knew *ἁμαρτία* of itself neither did nor could signify. Lev. iv. 3, 14, 32, 35; v. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; vi. 30; viii. 2. And they never omit the preposition, unless they name the sacrifice; as *ῥύσχος τῆς ἁμαρτίας*.”† Owen has most unaccountably mistaken the facts in this statement. In several of the texts which he enumerates, it is not the offering, but the sin, that is designated by *ἁμαρτίας*. Thus, Lev. iv. 35:—“And the priest shall make atonement (*περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἧς ἤμαρτε*) for his sin which he has sinned.” Owen asserts that the seventy “never omit the preposition, unless they name the sacrifice.” We have already appealed to a sufficient number of examples,—which might be multiplied,—to prove, that, so far from being unexampled, it is a common usage, to omit both the preposition, and the name of the sacrifice. One of the very texts enumerated by Owen disproves his assertion. Lev. v. 9:—“He shall sprinkle the blood of the sin-offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar, (*ἁμαρτία γὰρ ἐστὶ*) for it is sin.” Wherever *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* has reference to the offering, the preposition is introduced as a connective between *ἁμαρτία*, sin, and the name of the sacrifice, either expressed or implied by the use of adjectives and the

\* Turretinus de Satisf. Christi, Disp. iv. § 82.

† Owen on Justification, chap. xvii. Board of Pub., page 390.

article. Thus, Lev. iv. 3:—*Μόσχον περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας*; vi. 30, *Καὶ πάντα τὰ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας*, &c. There is no appearance of such an invented phrase as Owen speaks of. The preposition is only used where the structure of the language demands it.

Whatever be the conclusion of the reader on this subject, one thing is certain,—that when it is said that “by one man sin entered into the world,” that “in him all sinned,” and that “by one man's disobedience many were made sinners,” a relation to Adam's sin is indicated, to which that of Christ to ours presents no parallel. On this point, the remarks of Owen are conclusive. In reply to objections urged by Bellarmine, he says:—

“1. Nothing is more absolutely true, nothing is more sacredly or assuredly believed by us, than that nothing which Christ did or suffered, nothing that he undertook or underwent, did or could constitute him subjectively, inherently, and thereon personally, a sinner, or guilty of any sin of his own. To bear the guilt or blame of other men's faults, to be *alienæ culpæ reus*, makes no man a sinner; unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake it. But, that Christ should admit of any thing of sin in himself, as it is absolutely inconsistent with the hypostatical union, so, it would render him unmeet for all other duties of his office. Heb. vii. 25, 26. And, I confess, it hath always seemed scandalous unto me that Socinus, Crellius, and Grotius, do grant that, in some sense, Christ offered for his own sins; and would prove it from that very place wherein it is positively denied,—Heb. vii. 27. This ought to be sacredly fixed, and not a word used, nor thought entertained, of any possibility of the contrary, upon any supposition whatever.

“2. None ever dreamed of a transfusion or propagation of sin from us unto Christ, such as there was from Adam unto us. For Adam was a common person unto us; we are not so to Christ; yea, he is so to us; and the imputation of our sins unto him is a singular act of divine dispensation; which no evil consequence can ensue upon.”\*

In support of the position that we are not sinners in Adam's sin, Dr. Hodge appeals to Owen, with the assertion that, “It

\* Ibid. Ch. viii. p. 226.





is one of his standing declarations, 'To be *alienæ culpæ reus*, MAKES NO MAN A SINNER.'\*\* Owen's doctrine is true. But the very question at issue is, whether the sin of Adam is to us *aliena culpa*, a foreign crime. What the mind of that distinguished divine was, on this point, is apparent from the above extract. The reader will also observe how broad the line which Owen draws between our relation to Adam's sin and that of Christ to ours.

Our author's exposition of the nineteenth verse is equally objectionable with that already considered. The apostle having, in the twelfth verse, asserted both the condemnation to death and its cause, recurs, in the eighteenth, to this point, and states the former, in a parallel with justification:—"As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." But here the question arises, How is it consistent with truth and justice that many should be condemned by the offence of one; and, on the other hand, many, who are sinners, be justified by the righteousness of one? The apostle answers, It is upon sufficient grounds. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Here it is well said by Calvin, "This is not tautology; but the necessary declaration of the important truth, that the offence of one man proves us so sunk in guilt that we cannot be innocent. He had before said that we were condemned; but, to prevent us from daring to claim innocence as our own, he determined also to subjoin the universal condemnation of every individual of the human race, because he is a sinner. When he afterwards declares that we are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, we hence infer that Christ has procured righteousness for us because he has satisfied his Father. Hence it follows that righteousness exists in Christ as a quality; but what is his peculiar property is considered as bestowed on us believers."†

By Dr. Hodge, this view is rejected, and the two verses are represented as essentially the same in their meaning. The only

\* Hodge, 8vo ed. p. 228.

† Calvin on the Romans, ch. v. 19.

difference is that, in the eighteenth, the idea of *treating* men as sinners and as righteous is the more prominent; and, in the nineteenth, the *regarding* them as such. "Yet it is only a greater degree of promineney to the one, and not the exclusion of the other, that is in either case intended."\* The only arguments by which this view is sustained are two. The first is the assumption that the phrase to "make sinners," according to scriptural usage, merely means to regard and treat as sinners, without involving moral criminality. This has been sufficiently considered. The second consists in the assumption that there are but three modes of interpretation possible; which the professor thus states:—"If the first clause [of the nineteenth verse] means either that the disobedience of Adam was the occasion of our committing sin, or that it was the cause of our becoming inherently corrupt, and on the ground of these sins, or of this corruption, being condemned, then must the other clause mean that the obedience of Christ is the cause of our becoming holy, or performing good works, on the ground of which we are justified." Rejecting this, he adopts, as the only alternative, the view above presented. But, as we have seen, we are not reduced to such an alternative. As Adam's disobedience made himself a sinner, so did it make all those to be sinners who were in him; not only as it caused in them a corrupt and sinful nature, but primarily and chiefly as it involved them in the crime of the apostasy, by which they were depraved and corrupted. So, Christ's righteousness makes his people righteous, not only as it is in them a sanctifying principle, but, first and principally, and to the purpose of justification, solely, as it is a real conformity to the law; which the free gift makes to be truly, and in all its meritorious preciousness, theirs. And this is that rational ground of justification to which the apostle alludes when he says, "The free gift came upon all men to justification; for by one man's obedience many shall be made righteous."

† 13. *Scope of the apostle.* The scope of the apostle's argument, and the conclusions at which he aims, seem to us altogether at variance with the interpretation embraced by Dr. Hodge. He

† Hodge, pp. 181-182.



takes the ground that Paul simply teaches it to be a consequence of Adam's sin that all men are regarded and treated as though they had sinned. The apostle certainly does, in various forms, assert men to be thus treated. "Death passed upon all men." "Death reigned from Adam to Moses." "Many be dead." "The judgment was to condemnation" upon all men. Thus, undoubtedly, are we taught that all are regarded and treated as sinners; for death is the wages of sin. But is this all he teaches? In view of such an array of facts, the question arises in every heart, Why is this treatment? Dr. Hodge replies, as an interpreter of Paul, It is because they are regarded and treated as sinners! A multitude are assembled around the place of execution; a prisoner is on the scaffold; the cord is adjusted; the drop falls; and he is launched into eternity. All this is because he is regarded and treated as a murderer. But why is he thus treated? Paul tells us,— "Death passed to all men through the one in whom all sinned;" or, as Dr. Hodge prefers, "for that all sinned." "By the disobedience of one, many were made sinners." Nay, further, he asserts "that until the law sin was in the world;" and, if any one should question the assertion, plants himself upon the fact that they were treated as sinners by the unerring justice of God. "Death reigned;" and, therefore, unquestionably, they over whom his sceptre was swayed must have been sinners. Such is Paul's argument.

It is remarkable that our commentator distinctly lays down this very principle, and yet fails to see the inevitable consequences. "The execution of the penalty of a law cannot be more extensive than its violation; and consequently, if all are subject to penal evils, all are regarded as sinners in the sight of God. This universality in the infliction of penal evil cannot be accounted for on the ground of the violation of the law of Moses, since men were subject to such evil before that law was given; nor yet on account of the violation of the more general law written on the heart, since even they are subject to this evil who have never personally sinned at all. We must conclude, therefore, that men are regarded and treated as sinners on account

of the sin of Adam."\* Here the principle is truly stated, as fundamental to the apostle's argument, that "the execution of the penalty of a law cannot be more extensive than its violation." "We conclude therefore," since all men in Adam die:—what?—That all are, in him, violators of the law? "No," says the professor; "Adam's sin was not personally or properly the sin of all men." But "we conclude that men are *regarded and treated* as sinners on account of the sin of Adam." Can any thing be more plain than the discrepancy between the proposition and the inference here stated? "The execution of the penalty of a law cannot be more extensive than its violation;" *therefore* the penalty is executed on the posterity of Adam, although they are not violators of the law under the curse of which they suffer! In fact, the major premise is precisely equivalent to saying that men cannot be regarded and treated as sinners unless they are so. This, indeed, is true; and is the doctrine of the apostle. But how is it to be reconciled with the interpretation before us?

The parallel which Paul draws between Adam and Christ, is irreconcilable with the doctrine set forth by our expositor. That parallel, as we have already seen, is stated distinctly, in its several elements, with the points of difference defined. Briefly, to our present purpose, it comprehends the following points. Through Adam, death flows to all his seed; through Christ, the gift, eternal life. (v. 12-15; ch. vi. 23.) This death, in Adam, results from a judicial sentence of condemnation; and the life in Christ, from one of justification. (v. 18.) The ground of these sentences, Paul states distinctly, introducing it by the particle "for," expressive of the judicial reasons of the proceeding thus stated. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." All this implies a real and substantial union between these several heads and their representative bodies, which, accordingly, the apostle asserts. "Adam, in whom all sinned."—v. 12. "In Adam all die."—1 Cor. xv. 22. "There is no condemnation to them which are in

§ 14. Parallel  
of Adam and  
Christ.





Christ Jesus."—Rom. viii. 1. Dr. H. denies any "mysterious oneness" between us and Adam, by which his sin is really and criminally ours. By parity of reasoning, a similar denial should be made in the case of Christ and his people. But, here, the professor takes the opposite position:—"To be in Christ Jesus signifies to be intimately united to him in the way in which the Scriptures teach us this union is effected, viz., by having his Spirit dwelling in us. The phrase is never expressive of a merely external or nominal union."\* Thus we are justified, not by Christ's righteousness extrinsic to us and only nominally ours, but the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. viii. 1, 2. The power of the Spirit of Christ was the law or principle of holiness in him, the cause of the righteousness of the Mediator; and that Spirit, given to us, and uniting us to him, conveys a title in that righteousness thus wrought in him. Thus are we made righteous, not only as we are created unto holiness, nor by a constructive process merely; but by a real property in the righteousness of our Head. But all this involves the conclusion that our inbeing in Adam, the type of Christ, is neither external nor nominal, any more than is the other. As, in Christ, we are really endowed with his righteousness, and in it are justified; so, in Adam, we are truly sinners, and, therefore, justly condemned.

It is objected, that this would imply that the righteousness of Christ is a proper ground of self-complacency, in those to whom it is imputed.† The phrase is ambiguous, as we shall presently see. But surely that righteousness loses none of its intrinsic excellence and glory by reason of its bestowal upon me. Nor, because it is mine, is it any the less my privilege and duty to admire and boast of it. To look upon it and feel respecting it as if it were foreign to me, when in fact it is upon me, and belongs to me by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, making me a member of Christ, is so far from a becoming humility, that it would be believing a lie, to the great injury of the soul. There are two selves in the believer,—

\* Ibid. p. 181.

† Ibid. p. 135.

the old man, and the new. The one is his nature as received from Adam; by virtue of which he has communion in Adam. The other is that new nature received from Christ, by which he is a member of Christ's glorious body. If the believer views himself aright, it must always be as thus truly one with Christ, a member of the body, a branch of the vine; and thus endowed with an essential and indefeatable property in the righteousness of the Head. To cherish a complacency in respect to that righteousness, as if it were a private and several property, would indeed be to trust in a lie. So it would be a false and impossible remorse, which should assume the apostasy of Adam to be a private, several and personal sin of the several posterity of Adam, instead of being common and native. But, on the contrary, in both instances, the proper exercises of the soul are indicated, by the fact of our real and substantial communion in the nature that sinned, and in that which wrought the righteousness, in which we are justified. That this does imply and require complacency in that which thus by grace we are, it will hardly be necessary to prove. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."—Isa. xlv. 25. Paul says, "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, . . . caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities."—2 Cor. xii. 2-5. Listen, too, to the departing song of the same apostle, who was privileged with this heavenly vision:—"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."—2 Tim. iv. 6-8. So the beloved disciple exhorts us:—"Little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."—1 John ii. 28. The child of God may not cherish self-complacency; if, by that phrase, is meant, a confidence in the flesh. But it is not only his privilege, but his duty, to cherish a complacency in that which by grace he is. This, in fact, is





essential to true humility. The opposite is not grace, but ingratitude. Here, however, let it also be considered, that, if glorying in Christ is our duty and privilege, much more does it become us to bewail with contrite penitence our apostasy in Adam. As we have seen, we are natively and intrinsically in Adam; but, in the second Adam, altogether supernaturally, and by special grace.

The interpretation here considered is further exceptionable, as it ignores and, in a great measure, obliterates a fundamental idea, which runs through the entire argument of the apostle. It is, that the deed of Adam was not only an act of transgression, but an apostasy and depravation of the whole nature,—not of the individual Adam, but, of man. That this is Paul's doctrine, we have already seen. He carefully discriminates between the personal act of Adam, and the radical evil, which was involved in it. The former, he calls, "the offence," "the transgression," "the disobedience." The latter, he designates by one word,—sin; and the manner in which that noun, and the verb, to sin, are used by him, in the whole closely connected argument of this and the following chapters, leaves no room to doubt what he means by it. It can scarcely be questioned, that the word means the same thing, throughout the entire connection. And it is not possible to deny, that, in the latter part of it, the thing meant is that indwelling depravity, which "is enmity against God," (viii. 7), which wields a dominating power over the unregenerate, is the cause of all actual sin, (vii. 5), and involves those in whom it dwells in God's inevitable and righteous curse. Yet, scarcely does Dr. Hodge find allusion to the entrance of depravity in verse 12, nor any recognition of its presence, in the chapter. His only remark, on the subject, is, that "it is probable Paul meant to express, in the first instance, [in the twelfth verse,] the general idea, that all men fell in Adam; which includes the idea both of loss of holiness, and of subjection to the penal consequences of sin. It will appear, however, in the sequel, that the latter is altogether the more prominent idea."\* So little in-

\* Hodge, p. 116.

fluence does he allow the former idea, that, with this hint, it is dismissed; and the discussion of the rest of the chapter proceeds upon the supposition that all which is in the apostle's mind is an hereditary punishment, to which, in consequence of Adam's sin, we, although not morally chargeable with that sin, are exposed.

But we will not further insist on these and other points, which might be mentioned. Enough, we trust, has been presented, to justify the conclusion, that the learned and excellent commentator has taken a mistaken view of the passage in question; and that the old interpretation is to be preferred.

Having shown the power of Christ's gospel to justify, alike from the guilt of Adam's apostasy and that of a depraved nature § 17. Chap. and actual sins thence resulting, the apostle proceeds *ter vi.* in the sixth chapter to display its power in eradicating the depravity,—in removing the principle of apostasy, from the heart. He introduces this subject by raising a question which naturally suggests itself:—"If it be so that the abounding of sin has given occasion to grace to abound, in freeing men from its curse, shall we not continue in sin, that grace may yet more and more abound?" The answer to this question gives occasion to the unfolding of the nature and extent of man's native bondage to depravity, which involves a necessity of sanctifying power in the salvation of Christ, as the curse incurred renders necessary a righteousness for justification. In the beginning of the sixth chapter, he shows that such is the manner in which an interest in the salvation is imparted, that the continuance of a love of sin in the heart of the Christian is a contradiction in terms. Ch. vi.:—"What shall we then say? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? \* God forbid: How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" He then appeals to the nature of regeneration, in which "by one Spirit we all are baptized into one body,—the body of Christ,—and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."—1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 27. " \* Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? \* Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death;"—



and the design of this is our deliverance, not from the curse only, but from the power of sin,—“that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” “For if we have been joined with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: “Knowing this, that our old man”—our depraved nature, received from the first Adam—“is crucified with him,”—hostility to it was the motive, its guilt the cause, and its destruction the design of his death on the cross; and if we be united to him we acquire his mind of hostility to it, and a right to and interest in his redemption from it,—“that the body of sin”—the incorporated system of corrupt dispositions—“might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” “For he that is dead is freed from sin.” He that by baptism into Christ’s death is dead with him, is free from the dominion of corruption. “Now if we be [thus] dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; “Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.” “For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.” “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) in Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Paul then urges the saints that they should resist and subdue the dominating power of sin within, as they are thus bought with a price, and called to holiness:—“<sup>12</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. <sup>13</sup> Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God: <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” If you are indeed alive unto God, submit not to those lusts which incur death, and use as their instrument that body which is doomed to dissolution and must soon crumble to dust. “Neither yield ye your members to sin, as instruments of unrighteousness: but yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the

dead, and your members to God, as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

Here again arises a similar question to that which was proposed at the beginning of the chapter:—If we are free from the law, then may we not sin with impunity? “<sup>15</sup> What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid!” For this would be to make your liberty an opportunity for selling yourselves into a most degrading bondage. “<sup>16</sup> Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. <sup>18</sup> Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” He therefore exhorts them that as they have formerly yielded their members servants to uncleanness and iniquity, to the working of iniquity, so now they should yield their members to what the infirmity of their flesh constrains him to illustrate by calling it a servitude to holiness, though it is the noblest liberty. This persuasion he further urges by an appeal to the results which flow severally from the two alternatives,—from the one, death; from the other, eternal life:—“<sup>19</sup> I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness. <sup>20</sup> For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. <sup>21</sup> What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup> But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

§ 18. Chapter vii.

The apostle then, in the seventh chapter, illustrates the emancipation from the law, of which he has discoursed, by reference to the marriage tie, which only holds





for life; beyond which the authority of the relation ceases. So the people of Christ,—once married to the law,—being united to him, become interested in that death, by which he exhausted the law's demands, and escaped from its authority. They are therefore now dead to the law,—free from its chains; and at liberty to join themselves to Christ for sanctification. Chap. vii. "I Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? <sup>2</sup> For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. <sup>3</sup> So then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. <sup>4</sup> Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." His Spirit, dwelling and ruling within, the result must needs be the fruit of the Spirit. To understand the precise force of the illustration here employed, two or three things must be noticed. The apostle, having developed the fact that the first man, Adam, was he by whom sin entered into the world, and the second Adam he by whom came righteousness, assumes, as an element of his argument, the doctrine of Christ to Nicodemus, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. The "flesh" thus derived by birth from Adam he otherwise designates as "the old man;" by both of these expressions indicating its derivation from Adam, and, through it, our identity in him. It is also called "the body of sin;" and the principle which prevails in and through it is designated as "the law in the members," and "the law of sin and death." On the other hand, the new nature, which is implanted by the Spirit of Christ, is variously designated, as "the new man," "the inward man," "the spirit," and "I myself;" and its controlling influence is called "the law of the mind," and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Thus, in the conti-

nuous life of the same individual, does the apostle describe two distinct and successive identities,—the old man and the new. The old man is married to the law, and so holds natural men under its bonds, working in their members to bring forth fruit unto death. In the regenerate, this old man, being crucified with Christ, (ch. vi. 6,) is dead. But it was only through it, as married to the law, that they were ever subject to the law's bondage. Hence, "that being dead wherein they were held," the death of the party dissolves the bond; and they in whom the old man once dwelt, through which the bondage was upon them, are thus delivered from the law; and are married to Christ. The consequence is, that the law no longer exerts over them its irritating power, to the arousing of sin into activity. <sup>16</sup> For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death: <sup>17</sup> But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

The apostle then shows, that all this implies no disparagement to the law; that, on the contrary, the law is of essential importance, even as auxiliary to the gospel; serving as a schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ. This it does, by uncovering and detecting indwelling sin. For such is the deceitfulness of sin, that it lies concealed in the heart, until thus discovered. <sup>18</sup> What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. <sup>19</sup> But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. <sup>20</sup> For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. <sup>21</sup> And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. <sup>22</sup> For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. <sup>23</sup> Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. <sup>24</sup> Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become



exceeding sinful." This, as applying to the conversion and sanctification of every believer, Paul illustrates by his own example, through the rest of the chapter. He shows indwelling sin to be a law or principle of depravity, which resists the power of grace,—prevents conformity to the holy law, in which the heart of the Christian delights,—works deeds of transgression,—shows itself in its true colours, as sin, working death, by occasion of the presence of a good and holy law,—and induces intense distress in the heart of the child of God, by the conflict between holy and unholy principles, thus occurring;—a conflict from which there is no hope of deliverance, except by the power of Christ's Spirit, destroying utterly the body of sin. <sup>14</sup> "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold unto sin." <sup>15</sup> "For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." <sup>16</sup> "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good." <sup>17</sup> "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." <sup>18</sup> "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." <sup>19</sup> "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." <sup>20</sup> "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." <sup>21</sup> "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me." <sup>22</sup> "For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man:" <sup>23</sup> "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." <sup>24</sup> "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" <sup>25</sup> "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?"—Thus, in anguish of spirit, the apostle looks to the law; but it offers no remedy. In his despair, his eye falls upon the cross, and his cry of distress is changed to exultant strains of thanksgiving and praise:—"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In him is deliverance from the dominion of sin, as well as from the terror of the curse.

In the beginning of the eighth chapter, the conclusions flowing from the whole argument are rapidly summed up. Paul announces justification:—"There is now no condemnation." The ground of it is inhering in Christ; the proof and consequence of which is holy living, (v. 1). That this is so, results from the activity of a new principle,—*"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,"* by which believers are freed from the prevailing power—the law, of sin and death, (v. 2). Thus, that deliverance from the power of depravity, which confessedly the law never could accomplish, is wrought by Christ,—by his example and sufferings condemning sin, and by his Spirit freeing his people from it. The result is, that the world is divided into two, and but two, classes;—not Jews and Gentiles; but those who are in the flesh, in their natural state, as children of Adam; in whom the offence reigns; whose hearts are enmity against God and his law; and who are consequently under the curse;—and those who are Christ's; in whom his Spirit dwells; who consequently are sons of God, live in holiness, are free from the curse, and heirs of immortality.

In the argument of the apostle, at which we have thus taken a rapid glance, the following points bear upon our inquiry.

1. He describes sin as a law, existing natively in the souls of the posterity of Adam. A law is a controlling principle, which has within itself the cause of its efficiency. Thus, a preceptive law is "a mandate of some person or power, whose precept carries with it the reason of obedience,"\*—that is, the authority of the lawgiver; the law of gravitation is a principle in bodies, which is in itself the cause of their tending toward each other. So, by the apostle, the word is used in several applications, but always in the same sense. He speaks of the law of God,—meaning that holy, just and good commandment, which has in it the divine authority as the cause of its dominion. He mentions a "law of his mind," (vii. 23), which he otherwise calls "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," (viii. 2), which is nothing else than the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit, dwelling in, ruling and sancti-

§ 19. *The doctrine. Sin, as indwelling power.*

\* Chambers's Dictionary of Arts and Sciences.





fying believers. As opposed to this, he describes "a law in his members;" which he further characterizes as "a law of sin," (vii. 23), and, again, as "a law of sin and death," (viii. 2). This he represents as exerting such a power, that when he would do good, evil is present with him, (vii. 21),—an energy which brings him into a captivity so absolute and helpless as to extort from him the anguished cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?"—to which he finds no response of hope but in the omnipotent power of the Spirit of Christ, (vii. 25; viii. 2, 4, 9, 10).

Sin is, in other terms, described as a dominating power, which is absolute in the unregenerate, and active in Christians. Thus the apostle asserts the design of Christ's death to be the destruction of the dominion of sin in his people:—"that henceforth we should not serve sin," (vi. 6). He declares that they once "were the servants of sin," (vi. 17, 20); accuses himself as being, in respect to his carnal nature, his original condition, "sold under sin,"—into a bondage, which, even in his renewed state, was only broken,—not destroyed. He predicates his entire argument upon this view. In consequence of the antagonism between this active and domineering principle of sin, and the principle of grace, in the believer, he describes a conflict going on in his heart, in which there are two wills opposed inveterately to each other; and two sets of actions result. The new nature—"the mind"—is conformed to the law of God. But his natural affections and dispositions bow to the law of sin; so that when he would do good, evil is present with him; (vii. 21-25).

2. That of which the apostle speaks, is, not acts of sin, but, a principle in the soul; which he calls, sin, and which is the efficient cause of actual transgressions. It is represented as the "old man," invested with a "body," (vi. 6), and endowed with appetites and affections:—"Let not sin reign, that ye should obey it in the desires thereof."—vi. 12. "When we were in the flesh, the motions (*παθηματα*, the affections, emotions, passions) of sins did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."—vii. 5. The saints are exhorted that they should "not yield their members to sin, as instruments of unrighteousness."—vi. 13. Thus, sin is represented

as an agent, using the members of the body as instruments with which to work unrighteousness; and that, in contrast with God, using the same instruments, to work righteousness. The same form of expression is repeated in verse 19:—"For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and iniquity, unto the working of iniquity, even so yield ye your members servants to righteousness, unto works of holiness." So, "sin wrought in Paul all manner of concupiscence."—vii. 8. It deceived him and slew him, (vii. 11). And when he states of himself,—"that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I;"—he concludes that it is not he that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in him; (vs. 15, 17, 20).

3. This principle of sin is native in man, and pervasive of his being. It is the old man, the body of sin, (vi. 6). It is the characteristic of those who are in the flesh, (vii. 5),—of those who are not renewed by the Holy Spirit; (viii. 2-5, 9). Its essential characteristic—in which all its evil and enormity consists—is the fact that it is enmity against God, and therefore hostile to the law, (viii. 7), and, as such, the efficient cause of transgressions, (vii. 7-15).

4. The whole argument of the apostle is to the effect that the great end had in view, in the whole work of Christ, was the destruction of this body of sin, the eradication of this carnal nature, (vi. 6-18, &c.); and that the only efficiency which is adequate to accomplish this object is that of the Spirit of Christ, exerting a regenerating power, to the creation of a new principle of holiness, by the operation of which the old man—the principle of sin, derived by generation—will be destroyed; (viii. 2, 9-14).

One additional point we may not fail to insist upon, in our analysis of this most important part of the word of God. It is, § 20. Its origin in Adam. the relation which the whole exhibition of the apostle indicates between the offence, which he designates in the fifth chapter, and the sin, which he describes in those which follow. In the fifth chapter, from the twelfth to the nineteenth verses, he describes the offence in terms which, as we have seen, determine it, unequivocally, to be the first sin





of Adam, the apostasy. Of this sin, he then says, that "the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—v. 20, 21. It is in view of the case thus presented,—the offence abounding by virtue of the presence of the law, but grace triumphant over its curse,—that he opens the discussion of the sixth and seventh chapters with the question, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" As already hinted, the only way in which the offence could abound is, as being a principle of sin, bringing forth fruit in acts of disobedience, after Adam's example. The offence of Adam had in it two distinct aspects, in which it may be viewed; to wit, the assumption of an attitude hostile to God; and, the hostile attitude thus assumed. Viewed in the former light, it is the one offence, the transgression, by which death came on all men; whilst in the latter, it presents itself as a principle of evil, whence transgressions continually flow. But in these two there is but one criminality, which inheres inseparably in both, and consists essentially in that enmity to God which was enthroned in the first transgression, and thereafter reigns as a permanent principle of evil. In his discussion, the apostle recognises this identity in the two, and indicates it by the continuous flow of the argument, and by the manner in which the phrases, "the offence" and "the sin," are interchangeably used. At the same time, he discriminates the two aspects of the subject by the manner of discussion, which, after the order of nature, exhibits first, the doctrine respecting the offence as the sin of the world, involving the entire race in condemnation, and then, as a principle of sin, which abides in all men, and is the cause of all actual sins.

## CHAPTER XV.

## DEFINITION OF GUILT AND OF IMPUTATION.

THE word, guilt, is much used by the standard writers on original sin. By the Westminster divines, it is employed in such connections that their whole doctrine is materially involved in the sense in which it is to be understood.

§ 1. *Guilt is criminal liability.* Thus, in the very definition of original sin, the word occurs:—"The guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature," "is commonly called original sin." It is therefore requisite that we ascertain precisely the meaning of this word. It is the more necessary, as a definition is sometimes given which we are constrained to regard as materially defective; and which tends to modify very seriously the sense of our standards on the subject before us.

According to the definition to which we allude, the words, guilt and guilty, as applied to persons, do not convey any impeachment of crime. If the party is a criminal, other language is requisite to express the fact. All that is meant by guilt is, mere liability to punishment, at the bar of the law; and he who is guilty may be without crime, although condemned to suffer a penal infliction. This definition seizes upon a secondary and accidental element in the meaning of the word, and appropriates it, to the exclusion of that which is the primary and fundamental idea, from which the other takes its origin. That the question at issue is of importance, is evident. If the definition be adopted, which we suppose to be the true one, our Shorter Catechism is to be understood as teaching that "the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the criminality of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness,



and the corruption of his whole nature." If the other be preferred, that sinfulness is made to consist in the liability to be punished for that sin, &c. How our children are to be satisfied of the *sinfulness* of a mere penal liability, is not very clear. This much, however, is evident,—that the matter at issue is worthy of a very careful investigation.

In respect to the Scripture usage as to the word, guilt, much need not be said. We have already had occasion to point out the fact that the essential idea expressed by the word, sin, is, defection from a recognised rule of conduct; and that, although it ordinarily has respect to the law of God, it is also used in reference to other rules of action, as well as that; and hence the moral nature of the action involved is to be determined by the nature and obligation of the rule which is violated. The same remark applies to the word, guilt. It is invariably used to express the position of one who has sinned; that is, who has violated some law. Thus it is used in respect to the laws of the country. When, at the tribunal, a party is found guilty, the idea expressed is that of condemnation for violation of law. So, in the Scriptures, it is sometimes used in cases where great moral turpitude is not implied; but never where there has not been transgression of law. As Owen well expresses it, "Guilt is the respect of sin to the sanction of the law." It includes two ideas in its meaning. The one is, violation of law; and upon the character of the law which is violated depends the moral enormity which the word implies. Thus, the guilt of petty larceny is one thing, that of murder is another. One person may be guilty of violating conventional rules, which have no moral obligation; whilst another incurs the fearful guilt of blaspheming God. The second element in the meaning of the word, is, the liability to punishment which the transgression involves. This liability results from the terms of the law itself, denouncing the penal infliction against transgression; and the design of it is to vindicate the sovereignty of the law; which, if not honoured by the obedience of the subject, must be so by the infliction which it lays upon him. Hence no one can be guilty except he has violated the law which condemns him. And the

amount of moral turpitude which the word imputes, is dependent upon the moral obligation of the law which has been transgressed. The law of God being of infinite obligation, its demands infinitely righteous, and its penalty infinitely just, it follows that there cannot be guilt at the bar of that law without moral turpitude, and that of infinite enormity. The word is never used in the Scriptures where the guilty party is not impeached of transgression. In fact, so intimate is the relation there recognised between sin and guilt, that the word, (עוֹנָה), which is the one commonly employed to express guilt, is used, as Owen truly remarks, equally for sin, the guilt of it, its punishment, and satisfaction for it, whether pecuniary or by expiation. How intimately such a usage as this identifies guilt with sin, we need not insist.

The definitions of the standard theologians accord perfectly with the principles which we have stated, and the practice of the Scriptures. Calvin does not formally define the word; but we have his testimony on the question before us, in a line. He says of original sin, that "it is properly accounted sin before God; because there *cannot be guilt without crime*; (non esset reatus absque culpa)."\*

Says John Marck, "Guilt is obligation to punishment (*ex peccato vel delicto*) from sin or crime. It is, by some, inaccurately defined as the essence of the sin itself; but the essential matter of sin is the violation of law itself, which produces defilement and guilt. This guilt follows sin, partly by virtue of the divine law denouncing punishment against transgressions; partly from the intrinsic nature of sin, which, on account of its deformity and deviation from the ultimate end, always deserves punishment from a most righteous God. It therefore arises out of crime, and precedes punishment. As to its result, it pertains to the punishment; as to its source, to the crime. Guilt proceeds directly from sin; but the punishment, since it is by justice, is only from it by consequent provision."

"The papists improperly discriminate between the guilt of crime and of punishment; for if *crime* be taken for the offence,

\* Institutes, Book II. chap. i. § 8.





guilt is the medium between that and the punishment; if, for the stain, to it guilt is contradistinguished, since guilt is either potential, in its first action, indicating the intrinsic desert of punishment, which inseparably inheres in the crime or the stain so long as they remain, although the sin be remitted by the mercy of God; or actual, in its second action, which is separated and taken away from sin by remission, which is properly the taking away of the actual guilt,—the not enforcing of the declared will of God respecting the punishment which sin otherwise deserves,—on account of satisfaction given. These two [potential and actual guilt] differ as do gravity and gravitation, of which the latter is separable from a solid body, but the former is not. Whence it appears that the papists improperly distinguish between the remission of the punishment and of the crime, that they may favour their purgatory. Nor do they conform to reason, whilst sometimes they wish the guilt to be inseparable from the crime, that they may prove nothing of original sin to remain to the baptized,—they being unable to distinguish potential and actual guilt. Sometimes they so make guilt separable from the crime, that, the latter being remitted, they pretend the guilt and liability, at least to temporal punishment, to remain. But in fact the crime is not only the antecedent cause of the guilt, but also the recipient subject of it. It is not, therefore, possible for the accident to remain, the subject being taken away; but the accident being removed, the subject may still remain.”\*

“Guilt,” says Van Mastricht, “is obligation to punishment for sin, by which the sinner is said to be, *ὑπερ*—Lev. v. 2, 3, 4, 5; *ὑπὲρ ἀμαρτίαν εἶναι*,—under sin,—Rom. iii. 9, vii. 14; and in his sins,—1 Cor. xv. 17; *ὁπότερον ῥίπτεται τῷ θεῷ*,—Rom. iii. 19; a debtor to God.—Matt. vi. 12, and Luke vi. 4. Guilt follows sin, partly from its intrinsic nature and demerit, inasmuch as it is not a thing without character, or indifferent, but in its own nature evil, and deserving punishment; which, unless the nature of things should be confounded, and the distinction between

good and evil taken away, may not be withheld;—partly by the sanction of the divine law. The first is called the intrinsic desert of punishment, (Rom. i. 32,) the latter, the actual condemnation to punishment. The one is potential guilt, inseparable from sin; the other, actual, which, by the gracious dispensation of God, may be separated, if not from the sin, at least from the sinner. Guilt is, therefore, (*medium quid*), a link of connection between the crime and the punishment. It springs out of the crime, and leads to the punishment; so that the guilt of crime and the guilt of punishment are one, which lies as a medium between these termini, and is named equally from each.”

“From guilt arises (1) a conscience justly accusing and condemning; (2) terror; (3) flight from the presence of God, arising from fear of the divine vengeance; (4) punishment, the ultimate consequence of sin.”\*

Of the distinction between *reatus pœnæ* and *reatus culpæ*, this writer says, “All guilt consists in obligation to punishment; therefore the distinction is made without a difference; for guilt is a medium between crime and punishment, which, growing out of the crime, leads to the punishment,—coalescing with both, and constituting a medium which embraces both, and is designated as much from the one as from the other.” “Our opponents are able to urge nothing, unless it be that the guilt of crime cannot be separated from sin, since sin by its very nature deserves punishment, whilst the guilt of punishment may be taken away. But this does not call for a discrimination between criminal and penal guilt, but only between potential and actual,—of which the former cannot be separated, but the latter is by Christ.”†

Our next authority is Samuel Rutherford, Professor of Divinity in the University of St. Andrews. “In July, 1643, the Westminster Assembly sat, and to it he was sent up as one of the commissioners from Scotland. There exists, in the MSS. in the library of Edinburgh University, a sketch of the Shorter

\* Marchii Medulla, Locus vi. 16, 18, 19.

\* Van Mastricht, Theol. Lib. iv. cap. ii. § 7, 8.

† Ibid. Cap. iv. § 28.



Catechism in Rutherford's handwriting, very much resembling the Catechism as it now stands,—as if he had had the principal hand in drawing it up for the Assembly.... During his residence in London, several of his family died; yet, amid the trials and bustle of that time, he wrote 'The Due Right of Presbytery,' 'Lex Rex,' and 'The Trial and Triumph of Faith.'\* The following passages from the latter work occur in a discussion of the Antinomian doctrine that our very sins were transused to Jesus Christ. In opposition to this heresy, he says:—

"The guilt of sin, and sin itself, are not one and the same thing, but far different things. That I may prove the point, let the terms be considered. There be two things in sin, very considerable. 1. The blot, defilement and blackness of sin; which I conceive is nothing but the absence and privation of that moral rectitude, the want of that whiteness, innocence and righteousness, which the holy and clean law of the Lord requireth to be in the actions, inclinations and powers of the soul of a reasonable creature. 2. There is the guilt of sin; that is somewhat which issueth from this blot and blackness of sin; according to which the person is liable and obnoxious to eternal punishment. This is the debt of sin, the law obligation to satisfaction passive for sin; just as there be two things in debt, so these two things are in sin. . . . Now, here be two things in debt. 1. An unjust thing; a hurting of our brother in his goods: this is a blot, and a thing privately contrary to justice. 2. A just thing; a guilt, a just debt; according to which it is most just that the broken man either pay or suffer. Now, these two, as all contraries do, they make a number; as just and unjust must be two things, and two contrary things. I know there be cavils and subtleties of schoolmen touching the blot and the guilt of sin; but this is the naked truth, which I have here declared. Some say, 'the blot of sin, is that uncleanness of sin which is washed away by the blood of the Lord Jesus; and this is nothing but the very guilt of sin, which is wholly removed in justification.' But

\* Memoir by Bonar, prefixed to Rutherford's Letters. Carters, New York: 1856, p. 21.

I easily answer: The blot of sin hath divers relations, and these contrary one to another. As, 1. There is the blot of sin in relation to the holy law, as it is a privation of the rectitude and holiness that the spiritual law requireth; and it is formally sin, and not the guilt of sin. . . . 2. The blot of sin in relation to God, as offended and injured, putteth on the habit of guilt, and so is washed away in 'the fountain opened to the house of David,' and formally removed in justification; but now [in relation to that which was assumed by Christ] it is not formally considered as sin, but according to that which is accidental in sin; viz., obligation to punishment, which may be and is removed from sin, the true essence and nature of sin being saved whole and entire. Hence sin hath divers considerations. . . . As it offendeth and injureth God in his honour, and glory of supreme authority to command what is just and holy, it is an offence and provocation, (Isa. iii. 8; Ps. lxxviii. 17;) a displeasing of God, (1 Cor. x: 5; 2 Sam. xi. 27;) a grieving of him and his Spirit, (Eph. iv. 30; Gen. vi. 6; Ps. xcv. 10;) a tempting of God, (Ps. lxxviii. 18, xcv. 9; Acts xv. 10;) a wearying of the Lord, and making him to serve, (Isa. xliii. 24, vii. 15;) a loading of the Lord, (Isa. i. 24;) a pressing of the Lord as a cart is pressed under a heavy load of sheaves, (Amos ii. 13;)—and so is punished with everlasting punishment. Hence there is a twofold guilt: one fundamental, potential, the guilt of sin as sin; this is all one with sin, being the very essence, soul and formal being of sin; and this guilt cannot remove from sin, so as sin shall remain sin; take this away, and you take away sin itself. But this is removed in sanctification as perfected, not in justification. . . . But there is another guilt in sin, called the guilt or obligation to punishment; the actual guilt, or actual obligation of the person who hath sinned, to punishment; and this guilt is a thing far different from sin itself, and is separable from sin, and may be and is removed from sin, without the destruction of the essence of sin; and is fully removed in justification."\*

\* Rutherford's Trial and Triumph of Faith. Issued by the Committee of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, for the publication of the works of Scottish Reformers and Divines. Edinburgh. 1848, pp. 222.





"And truly it is bad divinity for Dr. Crispe to say, 'As we are actual real sinners in Adam, so here, God passeth really sin over on Christ.' For we sinned intrinsically in Adam, as parts, as members, as being in his loins; and we are thence 'by nature children of wrath.'—Eph. ii. 3. But it is blasphemy to say, that our blessed Saviour sinned intrinsically in us, as part or member of the redeemed, or that he is a son of God's wrath, for sin intrinsically inherent in him as it is in us. Further, Christ's bearing of our iniquities is an obvious Hebraism, and all one with the bearing,—not of the intrinsical and fundamental guilt of sin,—but of the extrinsical guilt, or debt and punishment, of sin."\*

We might add the harmonious testimony of Owen, Turretin, Ames of Franckaer,† and many others. In fact, the standard authorities are altogether unanimous. In these definitions, the following points are to be noticed:—

1. They, in every instance, include the idea of antecedent sin, as an essential element in the meaning of the word, guilt. In the language of Owen, it is "the relation of sin to the sanction of the law." It is "liability to punishment for sin."

2. Guilt is resolved into two elements: the one fundamental, intrinsical, potential,—“the intrinsic desert of punishment;”—the other, accidental, extrinsical, actual,—“the appointment to punishment, by the justice of God.” “The one pertains to the demerit of sin;” “the other, to the judgment of demerit.”

3. “There can be no liability to punishment,” says Owen, “*obligatio ad pœnam*, where there is not desert of punishment, *dignitas pœnæ*.” Again, “There can be no punishment, nor, *reatus pœnæ*, the guilt of it, but where there is *reatus culpæ*, or sin considered with its guilt.”

4. In the usage of Scripture, the sin and punishment are spoken of in a manner indicating the most intimate and inseparable relation. Guilt there, without exception, implies sin in the guilty. In the language of Owen, and with his italics, “It

\* Trial and Triumph of Faith, p. 289.

† See Owen on Justification, ch. viii. Board of Pub., p. 222; Turretin, Locus ix. Qu. viii. § 1, and Qu. iii. §§ 2-6; Amesii Theol. Modul., Lib. I. cap. 12.

signifies the relation of the sin intended unto punishment. And other significations of it will be in vain sought for in the Old Testament.”

5. Guilt “lies as a medium between the crime and the punishment, and is named equally from each.”

6. Crime and guilt are related as recipient subject and accident; and “it is not possible for the accident (guilt) to remain, the subject being taken away.”

7. Sin, says Turretin, “as it has respect to the precept of the law, is called unlawfulness or transgression; as it has respect to the threatening, guilt.”

8. “From guilt arises,” as the first consequence, “a conscience justly accusing and condemning.” Now, conscience does not deal with legal liabilities, but with moral criminality and desert.

The use of the word in the Westminster standards confirms the conclusions to which these definitions lead:—“Every sin,

§ 4. *Guilt in* both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal.”\* The reader will judge whether the idea of desert is here excluded from the word, guilt,—an exclusion which would give the close of the section the aspect of unmeaning tautology. Again, “The covenant being made with Adam not only for himself but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.” “The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin,” &c.† Here “the guilt of Adam's first sin” is stated as a sinful consequence of the sin which we “sinned in him.” Not only so, but in this analysis, in which the whole consequences are formally resolved into the two elements of criminal and penal,—“sinfulness and misery,”—the guilt is thus ranked under the criminal head, as one of

\* Confession, Chap. vi. § 6.

† Shorter Catechism, Qu. 16, 18.





the features of man's sinfulness. Notice, further, that Rutherford, a member of the Assembly, and probable author of this very Catechism, distinctly asserts, as we have seen, that "we sinned intrinsically in Adam, as parts, as members, as being in his loins;" and can there be a question, as to the meaning of the word, guilt, as used in this place of the Catechism; or, as to the doctrine which it is designed to teach? Again, we read that, our first parents "being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation."\* Now, imputation has respect to the precept of the law alone, and not to its sanction. In other words, in imputation the subjects are compared to the law, and judged as to conformity or nonconformity to it; as sin is imputed to the sinner, and righteousness to Christ. It is altogether an incongruous use of the word to speak of the penal sanction of the law being imputed to the transgressor,—the miseries of hell imputed to Satan. And yet such, precisely, will be the incongruity of the language of the Confession, above quoted, if the word, "guilt," be interpreted by, mere liability to punishment. The only definition which will harmonize with this passage is that asserted by the authorities above given, including with the idea of exposure to punishment, that of criminality, the cause of that liability. In fact, our Confession and Catechisms use the word in no other than this its primary and proper sense, indicating the evil or demerit and condemnation which belong to sin. They neither use it in the sense of actual, as contradistinguished from potential guilt, nor in that of potential guilt, exclusive of actual. The former of these is, by orthodox authorities, applied to the single case of Christ, voluntarily assuming the penal liability of his people; the latter, to his people, who, although thus released from the penalty of the law, are nevertheless, in themselves, sinners deserving of punishment. But on neither of these subjects is the word employed in our standards.

Another word, of which it is necessary to fix the precise mean-

\* Confession, Chapter vi. § 8.

ing, is, imputation. To impute, is, to attribute a moral act or attitude to a party. It is the charging or setting  
 § 5. *Imputation defined.* to the account of a moral agent, of such facts, whether meritorious or criminal, as constitute the grounds upon which the tribunal of justice may base the decree of approval or condemnation. Thus, when God declares that, "If any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it,"—Lev. vii. 18, the meaning is, that it will not be accredited to the party as compliance with the law. When it is stated that, whosoever killeth a sacrifice elsewhere than at the door of the tabernacle, "blood shall be imputed unto that man, he hath shed blood,"—Lev. xvii. 4, the latter phrase is equivalent to the former: the imputation of blood is the charging of it against the party, at the tribunal, in order to sentence. So, too, in Paul's quotation from the Psalms, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin,"—Rom. iv. 7, 8, the meaning is manifest:—not to impute sin, is, to omit the charge of it against the transgressor. See, also, 2 Sam. xix. 19; Psalm xxxii. 2; 2 Cor. v. 19; 2 Tim. iv. 16. "These, and numerous similar passages, render the scriptural idea of imputation perfectly clear: it is laying any thing to one's charge, and treating him accordingly. It produces no change in the individual to whom the imputation is made: it simply alters his relation to the law. As far as the meaning of the word is concerned, it is a matter of indifference whether the thing imputed belonged antecedently to the person to whom the imputation is made, or not."\*

Here, however, a question of no little importance arises. Can that be imputed to a party at the bar, which does not really belong to him? The question is in respect to the bar of God; and it is, therefore, equivalent to asking whether "the judgment of God is according to truth;" of which the apostle declares that he is sure. (Rom. ii. 2.) Says Turretin, "Imputation is either

\* Hodge on the Romans, p. 88.



of what belongs to another, or of what is our own. Sometimes that is imputed to us which is ours personally; in which sense God imputes sins to sinners whom he punishes for their own personal crimes; and, in respect to good deeds, the zeal of Phineas is said to have been imputed to him for righteousness. Psalm cvi. 31. Sometimes that is imputed which is extraneous to us, and not our deed; in which manner, the righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, and our sins to him; although neither had he sin in himself, nor we righteousness." "But, when the sin of another is said to be imputed to any one, it is not to be understood that the sin is, purely and in every sense, foreign to him; but that, by some means, it pertains to him to whom it is said to be imputed; if not strictly his own, individually and personally, then (communiter) conjointly, on account of community between him and its proper author. For there can be no imputation of the sin of another, unless it is based upon some special union of the one with the other."\* So, Van Mastricht, speaking of original sin, says, "The imputation does not consist in a merely putative act, by which God considers the breach of the covenant to have been committed not only by our first parents, but in action and personally by all their posterity; for in this there is a manifest error;—but that the breach of the covenant which was committed by the act of our first parents, was committed by all their posterity, in them, as in their cause."† And Marck says that "Adam's transgression was not merely personal, as were those that followed it, but common, and, in a sense, belonging to the nature. It hence appears that the dogma of the Pelagians and Remonstrants is to be rejected,—that the sin of Adam was so alien to us, that it could not be called ours; for by God it could not be imputed to us, justly, unless it was in some manner ours; since 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die.'"<sup>‡</sup>

Imputation, then, is the finding of the facts, upon a judicial investigation,—the entering of the verdict, by which the case is defined in its true character; a comparison of which with

the requirements of the law, constitutes the ground of the decision of the judge, either of approval or condemnation. In this imputation, the case is never viewed or represented in any other light than precisely as it is. For example, it does not consider him as a personal sinner, an immediate transgressor, who is only guilty in the person of another, his representative. Nor does it account him to be righteous, who, though chargeable with no personal dereliction, has transgressed in the person of another. In short, in imputation, a faithful record is made of the case, precisely as it is, in all its aspects and elements; and, this being done, the office of imputation ceases. The rest remains for the decision of the judge, in accordance with the law.

Another point, to be distinctly marked, is, that imputation does not exert any kind of efficiency over the facts, to modify or transform them. It does not create any different state of the case from that which existed prior to the imputing act. That which is not mine, otherwise, cannot be made mine by imputation. It does not make the case; but ascertains and records it, as it already exists.

\* Turretini Instit., Locus I. Qu. ix. §§ 10, 11.

† Van Mastricht, Lib. iv. Cap. ii. 10.      ‡ Marckii Medulla, Lib. vi. § 86.





## CHAPTER XVI.

### ORIGINAL SIN IMPUTED—THE GUILT OF ADAM'S FIRST SIN.

"*Peccatum originale, . . . quomodo intravit? . . . Per propagationem, per imputationem, idque jure hereditario, propagatum per generationis naturalis successionem. Tria erant in primo peccato; 1. culpa actualis; 2. pravitas naturalis, sive horribilis naturæ deformitas; 3. reatus legalis. Et hæc omnia ad posteros introierunt, non una via, sed triplici; culpa participatione, quia omnes seminali ratione fuerunt in lumbis Adam; pravitas propagatione, seu generatione, quia filios genuit Adam, ad imaginem suam, non Dei; reatus imputatione, quia gratia ita Adamo collata est ut si peccaret, tota posteritas cum ipso ea excideret; sicut feuda tali conditione dantur vasalis, ut si ea per culpam perdant, eodem reatu liberos involvant.*"—POLI SYNOPSIS CRITICORUM, in Rom. v. 12.

THE statement given above presents, with admirable clearness and discrimination, the doctrine of original sin, as held from the beginning, in the Reformed churches. It is adopted by Poole, with an appeal to the authority of Pareus, the colleague and editor of Ursinus. "There were three things in the first sin. 1. Actual crime. 2. Natural depravity, or a horrible deformity of nature. 3. Legal guilt. And these come upon his posterity, not in one but three ways;—crime by participation, because all were, by the law of propagation, in the loins of Adam;—depravity by propagation or generation, because Adam beget sons in his own image, not that of God;—guilt by imputation, because grace was so bestowed upon Adam, that if he sinned, he in the act destroyed his whole posterity with himself; as fiefs are given to vassals upon such terms that if by any offence they forfeit them, they involve their children with themselves in the damage." To precisely the same purpose are the statements of our Catechism:—"The covenant being made with Adam not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind

descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him" into an estate, the sinfulness of which "consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin."

In Adam's sin, there were four several things, which it is necessary carefully to distinguish. These were,—the action of apostasy, or depravation of his nature,—the depravity, or aversion from God, in which that action terminated,—the criminality, guilt, or desert of punishment, thence arising; and,—the formal act of plucking the fruit. This latter act, again, is to be viewed in two aspects;—as it was an act personal to Adam; and as it was the action, and constituted the publication and pledge, of the apostasy of his nature, and seal of the curse consequent thereon. In this latter respect, it is an element in the account of sin, which stands on record against the whole nature and race of man. Thus viewed, however, its criminality is not distinguishable from that of the apostasy, of which it was the consummation and first fruit. The act of apostasy, as it was the embrace of depravity,—the cause of the corruption of man's nature,—will come to be considered in the next chapters, in connection with the discussion of original sin inherent. That with which we have now to do is, the guilt of the apostasy. The doctrine which we derive from the Scriptures on the subject is, that we were so in Adam that we share in the moral responsibility of his apostasy, as really as though we had wrought it for ourselves, personally, and severally; and that in consequence we are guilty, and condemned under the curse, at the bar of God's infinite justice. Of the evidence in support of this doctrine, we have already given a large illustration, and, we trust, established it by the testimony of the Scriptures.

The rejection of our doctrine leaves but one alternative,—the denial that we have any thing to do with Adam's sin; or a choice between the mediate and Arminian theories. Of these, the former is held by Edwards. He takes the ground that we were not natively one with Adam, in any such sense, as to involve the derivation from him of



qualities and relations; since, not only are we new and distinct creations, at each instant, emanating, by a perpetually creative agency, from the immediate hand of God,—but, in particular, the phenomena of generation are nothing but the established order in which, by such an immediate agency, he brings into existence both body and soul. Yet, by the assertion of his “arbitrary sovereignty,” God has put forth a constitution by which the state of the case, simply and absolutely considered, is set aside, and we are constituted one with him. This constituted oneness, however, does not immediately and fully bind us in the guilt of the first sin; but only involves us in depravity of nature. The action of this depravity, constituting in us a corrupt assent to the first sin of Adam, becomes at length the ground of the imputation of the sin to us. He says, “The first being of an evil disposition in the heart of a child of Adam, whereby he is disposed to approve of the sin of his first father, as fully as he himself approved of it, when he committed it, or so far as to imply a full and perfect consent of heart to it, I think is not to be looked upon as a consequence of the imputation of that first sin, any more than the full consent of Adam’s own heart, in the act of sinning; which was not consequent on the imputation of his sin to himself, but rather prior to it in the order of nature. Indeed, the derivation of the evil disposition to the hearts of Adam’s posterity, or rather the coexistence of the evil disposition implied in Adam’s first rebellion, in the root and branches, is a consequence of the union that the wise author of the world has established between Adam and his posterity; but not properly a consequence of the imputation of his sin; nay, rather antecedent to it, as it was in Adam himself. The first depravity of heart, and the imputation of that sin, are both the consequences of that established union; but yet in such order, that the evil disposition is *first*, and the charge of guilt *consequent*; as it was in the case of Adam himself.” Again, in reply to the objection that sorrow and shame are for personal sin alone, he says, “Nor is it a thing strange and unheard-of, that men should be ashamed of things done by others whom they are nearly concerned in. I am sure it is not *unscriptural*; especially when they are justly

looked upon in the sight of God, who sees the disposition of their hearts, as fully consenting and concurring. From what has been observed, it may appear, there is no sure ground to conclude, that it must be an absurd and impossible thing for the race of mankind truly to partake of the sin of the first apostasy; so as that this, in reality and propriety, shall become their sin; by virtue of a real *union* between the root and branches of the world of mankind, (truly and properly availing to such a consequence,) established by the author of the whole system of the universe; to whose establishments is owing all propriety and reality of union, in any part of that system;—and by virtue of the full consent of the hearts of Adam’s posterity to that first apostasy. And therefore the sin of the apostasy is not theirs, merely because God imputes it to them; but it is truly and properly theirs, and on that *ground* God imputes it to them.” Again:—“The affair of the derivation of the natural corruption of mankind, in general, and of their consent to, and participation of, the primitive and common apostasy, is not in the least intermeddled with, or touched, by any thing meant or aimed at in the true scope and design of this place of Ezekiel,” (Ezek. xviii. 1–20). So he speaks of the teachings of the word of God, “concerning the derivation of a depravity and guilt from Adam to his posterity.”\* In the latter of these places, the order of enumeration implies what the others assert,—an imputation of the guilt of the first sin, because of the corrupt nature which in us actually approves the deed. That such was the doctrine of Edwards on the subject, is unquestionable. He not only thus again and again asserts it, and weaves it into his argument, but quotes and adopts the language of Stapfer, which is confessedly at variance with the received doctrine of the Reformed on this point.

This doctrine of mediate imputation—although it, or something similar, is practically inevitable, upon the adoption of Edwards’ theory of identity—is logically irreconcilable with that theory. If there be in truth no real identity in things, except by the arbitrary process which he designates by the phrase, “divine constitution,”—and if by such a constitution we and

\* All these passages are from the treatise on Original Sin, Part IV. ch. 3.





Adam are one,—it follows, that in the same sense precisely in which the sin of eating the forbidden fruit was subsequently chargeable on the Adam who was excluded from the garden, it is chargeable on us. "Simply and absolutely considered," he that was driven forth with his weeping wife, under the terrors of the curse, was not the same, who had committed the fatal deed, any more than are we. And the "divine constitution,"—which was effectual to justify the assumption of identity in the innumerable series of individuals, who by the creative power were made the fleeting succession, and by sovereignty constituted the personal unit, the first Adam,—was equally competent to constitute us one with him; and, as one, immediately responsible for his deed. But, although Edwards was ensnared by the subtlety of his own philosophy, his soul instinctively recoiled from his conclusions, and uttered an unapprehended but powerful protest against the sufficiency of his plea,—against the adequacy of a system, which based the whole tremendous consequences, which are involved in original sin, upon a ground so unreal, as a divine constitution, transforming the facts, and making things to be identical, which were essentially and by creation several and distinct. He therefore has recourse to the notion of mediate imputation, to release himself from the difficulties which his theory had created. He thus relieves his consciousness, respecting the relation of the scheme which he had contrived to the principles of divine justice, at the expense of his own consistency, and of the doctrine which he had set himself to defend. Such was the consequence in Edwards' case;—and such, or like it, will be the result, whenever and wherever the attempt is made to vindicate the doctrine of original sin by recourse to any system of arbitrary constructions or legal intendments,—by any thing short of a real and native inbeing of Adam's posterity in him, as the root and cause of the race.

The mediate theory is, in fact, a mere modification of the Arminian doctrine,—essentially the same, and differing merely in phraseology. They agree in overlooking or denying Adam's causative relation to the race, as bearing upon the doctrine of imputation,—in denying any proper oneness between Adam and

us,—any communion of his seed in the crime of his transgression. They agree in holding us to be involved in certain evils, in consequence of Adam's sin; and in denying them to be the penalty which attaches to actual sin; although some of them, as Whitby and the Remonstrants, speak of them as penal evils,—the punishment of Adam's sin. They agree in holding that criminality, in the proper sense of the word, first arises out of active depravity; and they commonly concur in denying that the infinite wrath and curse of God is fully incurred, until depravity has brought forth fruit in actual sins. The only real difference is, as to the manner in which, to save appearances, the word, imputation, is introduced into the two several systems. By the one, it is used to express the fact, that we, by our own sins, incur a like criminality and punishment with Adam;—by the other, to express the liability to temporal evils, which attaches to us, on account of the first sin.

The Arminian doctrine is thus stated and vindicated by Grotius in his commentary on Romans v. 12:—"In whom all have *§ 3. Arminian* sinned." It is a common metonymy among the *theory.*

Hebrews to use the word 'sin' instead of 'punishment,' and 'to sin' instead of 'to undergo a penalty;' whence, by metalepsis, still farther extending the figure, they are said to sin, who bear any evil, even without fault; as Gen. xxxi. 36, and Job vi. 24, where *עָנָה*, to sin, is translated by *δυσπραγεῖν*, to suffer adverse fortune. *Εφ' ᾧ* in quo here means, through whom, as *ἐν* is taken with the dative in Luke v. 5; Acts iii. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 11; Heb. ix. 17. Chrysostom on this place says, 'He falling, they also who did not eat of the tree were all by him rendered mortal.' On verse 19 he says, "Here again is a metonymy. They were so treated as though they had actually sinned; that is, they were subjected to death. So the word, 'sinner,' is used in 1 Kings i. 21, and elsewhere."\*

The same theory is more largely defended by Whitby. After citing and rejecting, in turn, the suppositions, that we actually and formally sinned in Adam; and, that we are made sinners by the act of the imputation of Adam's sin; he says, "I am forced

\* Grotii Annotationes, in loco.





to prefer before them, that of the Greek fathers; viz. that we all sinned in Adam, *i.e.*, by becoming obnoxious to that death which was the punishment of his sin; and, that 'by one man's disobedience many were made sinners,' by being subject to the death and temporal calamities and miseries which came upon all mankind for Adam's sin; so that we become sinners in him, or by his disobedience, by a metonymy of the effect, by suffering the punishment which God had threatened to him for it, as the experience of all men and women show we do, in all the parts of the threat; and this is a common sense of the word, *ἁμαρτία*, which signifies both sin and the punishment of it. So Gen. iv. 7:—'If thou dost evil, *חַטָּאת* sin lieth at the door,'—that is, the punishment of sin, ver. 13; so Gen. xix. 15, 'Make haste,' saith the angel to Lot, 'and escape, lest thou be consumed *בְּכַבֵּשׁ* in the sin of the city,' that is, in the punishment of the city, in plaga descendente propter culpam incolarum urbis, *Arab.*; and Gen. xxxi. 39, Jacob speaks to Laban thus, 'That which was torn of beasts, *אֲנֹכִי אֲחַסְתָּהּ*, *ἐγὼ ἀποτίνωσιν*, pœnas dabam, I suffered for it;' the sin was upon me, saith Aben Ezra; Gen. xliii. 9, Judah speaks thus to Jacob concerning Benjamin, 'If I bring him not again, *לֹא יִשְׁעֵנִי*, *ἁμαρτωλὸς ἔσομαι εἰς σέ*, *i.e.* 'I will suffer punishment;' see chapter xlii. 37; *i.e.* 'let me bear the blame;' so, also, chapter xlv. 32; so Bathsheba said to David, 'I and my son Solomon shall be *חַטָּאִים*, *ἁμαρτωλοί*, sinners,' 1 Kings i. 21; *i.e.* we shall be punished as sinners, and be in danger of our life; so *לֹא יִשְׁעֵנִי*, impium non faciet, 'he will not condemn him,' Psalm xxxvii. 33; *וְכִי יִשְׁעֵנִי*, et sanguinem innocentem condemnabunt, Psalm xciv. 21; so, also, Job ix. 20; so the lepers say one to another, 'We do not well if we tarry till the morning light; then we shall be found sinners,' 2 Kings vii. 9; *i.e.* we shall be punished by the king; and Zech. xiv. 19, 'This shall be *מַצֵּת מִצֵּרִים*, *ἁμαρτία Αἰγύπτου*, the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.' This phrase of bearing sin is constantly used in this sense; as when it is said, *וְהָיָה שָׂמָּה*, 'they shall bear their iniquity, they shall die,' Lev. xx. 20; and, *ἁμαρτίαν κομιοῦνται, ἀποίσουνται*, Lev. xx. 17, 19; Num. xiv. 34,

*λήψομεθα ἁμαρτίας ὁμῶν*; Lam. v. 7, *ὁπέσχομεν τὰ ἀνομήματα αὐτῶν*, 'we have borne their iniquity.' . . . It is true, we meet not with the words *ἁμαρτὸν* and *ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάνθησαν*, in this sense, elsewhere in the New Testament; but then this may be because the comparison is not elsewhere made betwixt the first Adam and the effects of his disobedience, and the second Adam and the effects of his obedience to the death; and because the opposite phrase, *δίκαιοι κατεστάνθησαν*, required that the words opposed should be used in the metonymical sense; for when the apostle saith, 'By the obedience of one man many were made righteous,' it is evident he spoke not of Christ's active obedience, but of his passive obedience, or suffering death for us. For, 1. The whole chapter is employed in setting forth the benefits accruing to us by his death, ver. 6, 8–11. 2. The effect of this obedience is, our justification; now, *that*, through the whole Scripture, and in this very chapter, is constantly ascribed to the death of Christ, and his blood shed for us, ver. 9, 10, 16–18. 3. The disobedience, by which many were made sinners, is plainly declared by the apostle to be one single act of disobedience in Adam, and therefore the obedience opposed to it cannot, in reason, be the active obedience of Christ's whole life, but that obedience to the death which the apostle mentions, Phil. ii. 6, 8. Now, by this passive obedience, we cannot be made formally righteous, but only metonymically, by being made partakers of that freedom from the condemnation and guilt of sin, and that reconciliation, which Christ purchased by his meritorious death and passion:—"

¶ 4. *This theory untenable.* In reference to these arguments, the remarks of Witsius are appropriate:—"Grotius really prevails when he thus comments on the passage before us:—"It is a common metonymy in the Hebrew to use the word, sin, instead of punishment; and, to sin, instead of, to undergo punishment; whence, extending this figure, they are said by a metalepsis, *ἁμαρτωλοί*, to sin, who suffer any evil, though they are innocent; as Gen. xxxi. 36; Job vi. 24."

"This illustrious person seems to have wrote without attention, as the whole is very impertinent. (1.) Though we allow that

\* Whitchy's Commentary on Romans v. 19.



sin does sometimes metonymically denote the punishment of sin; yet we deny it to be usual in Scripture, that he who undergoes punishment, even while innocent, may be said to sin. Grotius says it is frequent; but he neither does nor can prove it by any one example; which is certainly bold and rash. Crellius, confuting his book on the Satisfaction of Christ, brings in the saying of Bathsheba to David:—"I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders,"—that is, says he, we shall be treated as offenders, or be ruined. But a *sinner*, or even *sin*, and *to sin*, are different things. The former is said of Christ, (2 Cor. v. 21;) but not the latter, on any account. Moreover, to be a sinner, does not signify, in the passage alleged, to undergo punishment without any regard to a fault or demerit; but to be guilty of aiming at the kingdom, and of high treason, and as such to be punished. . . . (2.) Though we should grant, which yet we do not, in the least, that to sin, sometimes denotes, to undergo punishment; yet it cannot signify this, here; because the apostle, in this place, immediately distinguishes between death as the punishment, and sin as the meritorious cause; 'death by sin.' And, by this interpretation of Grotius, the apostle's discourse, which we have already shown is solid, would be an insipid tautology. For, where is the sense to say, 'So death passed upon all, through whom all die'? . . . (4.) It cannot be explained consistently with divine justice, how, without a crime, death should have passed upon Adam's posterity. Prosper reasoned solidly and elegantly against Collator, 'Unless, perhaps, it can be said that the punishment, and not the guilt, passed on the posterity of Adam; but to say this is in every respect false. For it is too impious to judge so of the justice of God: as if he would, contrary to his own law, condemn the innocent with the guilty. The guilt, therefore, is evident where the punishment is so; and a partaking in punishment shows a partaking in guilt; that human misery is not the appointment of the Creator, but the retribution of the Judge.' If, therefore, through Adam all are obnoxious to punishment, all, too, must have sinned in Adam."\*

Witsius is slightly inaccurate, in the statement which he

\* Witsius on the Covenants, Book I. chap. viii. 83, 84.

makes in the same place, that in Genesis xxxi. 36, and Job vi. 24, to which Grotius appeals, "neither in the Hebrew do we find *חַטָּא*, *to sin*, nor in the Greek version, *δοσπαρεῖν*." In Genesis xxxi. 36, *חַטָּא* is in the Hebrew; but is rendered in the Greek version by *ἀμάρτημα*, not *δοσπαρεῖν*; and in the English by "sin;" which is undoubtedly correct. *מַה חַטָּאִי* "What is my sin?" The words do not occur in the place in Job; nor is there any thing, in either case, to sustain the assertions of Grotius.

No modification of the Arminian interpretation is at all reconcilable with the design and argument of the apostle. It is said that in the text of Paul the word, *sinned*, is equivalent to, being rendered mortal,—“being so treated, as if they had actually sinned,”—being subjected to the penalty of the law. These expressions are all mere periphrases for subjection to death, the wages of sin. If we arbitrarily limit this definition to the verb, *sinned*, and allow the noun to retain its proper meaning, the passage will then stand thus:—"As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, because (or in whom) all are subject to death." Or, if we substitute either of the explanatory phrases, the result is equally objectionable. The infliction of death is the endurance of the penalty,—the being treated as sinners. Thus, then, the apostle will read, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so all men were treated as sinners, because all men were treated as sinners."

If we should substitute the periphrasis instead of the noun, *sin*, as well as the verb,—and the discrimination between them is altogether arbitrary,—the result would be, still more utterly to confound the argument of the apostle. The very thing for which he professes to account is the fact that stands out on the whole page of history and of Scripture,—that all men are under the curse,—that they are treated as sinners. The problem which he professes to solve, is, Why this treatment? And when to this question he replies in the most unambiguous terms, and in a variety of phraseology, interwoven into a closely wrought argument, that it is for sin,—that "to all men death passed through him in whom all sinned;" or, if the other rendering be preferred,





"because all sinned,"—shall we, instead of accepting the sufficient and conclusive reason thus given, so interpret the apostle's argument as to reduce him to an imbecile repetition of the fact which he is professedly accounting for? "All men are treated as sinners, because all men are treated as sinners!" The whole argument of the apostle, as is unanimously agreed by orthodox commentators, and cannot be successfully questioned, is from the universal prevalence of the curse to the universality of sin—not of individual transgressions, but of the one sin by which death reigns over all. His fundamental proposition—which he does not attempt to prove, but assumes as unquestionable—is, that whenever a man is treated as a sinner he really is one. He concludes that, since all are so treated, all, then, are sinners; hence, all need the salvation of Christ.

The argument from the use of the word, sin, to express the punishment of sin, when duly considered, so far from establishing the Arminian doctrine, is conclusively against it. § 5. *Use of the word, sin.* Although in the Old Testament there are a number of words used to indicate punishment, there is none which, of itself, expresses the idea of punition,—of evil inflicted for the satisfaction of violated law. In many instances the idea is conveyed by suggestion. Thus, in Amos i. 3:—"For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn it away;" that is, I will not prevent the punishment. Job xxxi. 28:—"This also were an iniquity for the judge." Sometimes it is expressed by, נָקָם, *vengeance*; expressing satisfaction to violated personal rights, rather than to the claims of law. See Deut. xxxii. 35; Ps. cxlix. 7; Neh. i. 2, &c. Again, פָּקַד, is sometimes translated "to punish;" but the word expresses, not penal, but disciplinary, inflictions, designed for the correction and recovery of the subject of them. Comp. Lev. xxvi. 18, 28, 44, 45, with Ps. xvi. 7, &c. Words expressive of the form of the infliction are also used to indicate punishment; as, מָךְ, *to smite*,—Lev. xvi. 24; מַשֵּׁה, *a scourge*,—Isa. x. 26.

The most frequent form in which punishment is indicated, is, by using some word expressive of sin. It is this characteristic of the Hebrew language to which Grotius and Whitby have

reference, in the arguments by which they attempt to show the word, sin, to mean, punishment. But sin is not in any instance used to express the infliction of evil upon those to whom crime is not attributed. The contrary of this is asserted by Grotius; and he very strangely cites Gen. xxi. 36:—"And Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin?"—and Job vi. 24:—"Cause me to understand wherein I have erred." It is true, Jacob and Job were innocent, in the matters at issue; but it is of real sin,—of real errors,—that they predicate the demand for proof. It cannot be pretended that their challenges had respect to any thing else than false accusations of real crime. Jacob certainly does not mean to ask, "What is my punishment?" The fact that such a writer as Grotius is unable to produce any better evidence, is proof conclusive that there is none; that the words which signify, sin, are never used to express an infliction of evil, unless crime is attributed to the victim.

In no case, in fact, does the word, sin, properly mean, punishment; but, in all circumstances, it retains its own proper significance; and intimates punishment, not directly, but implicitly. The principle which lies at the basis of the entire practice of the Scripture, on this subject, is, that in every sin there is essentially involved demerit or guilt, for which there must be satisfaction, to the penal sanction of the law. Hence, to charge sin upon a party, is, to imply, inevitably and by the force of the facts, the certainty of punishment. And so inseparable is the recognised relation between the sin and punishment, that the latter can only be removed by taking away the sin itself. Hence, the Psalmist sings, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, (*Heb.* taken away,) whose sin is covered."—Ps. xxxii. 1. That our statement, respecting the manner in which punishment is, in the Bible, indicated by the word, sin, is correct, will appear from the fact, that the punitive sense is not limited to any one word; but, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language, may be expressed by any word, which indicates sin. Thus, נָדָם is used in Gen. iv. 13; Lev. xxvi. 41, 43; Job xix. 29, &c. נָדָם, in Lam. iii. 39, iv. 6; Zech. xiv. 19. נָדָם, in Ex. xxiii. 21; Ps. xxxii. 1.



Gen. v. 10, xxxiv. 21, 22. Examples to the same effect might be multiplied indefinitely.

No more appropriate scriptures could be chosen, for the illustration of our doctrine, than those cited by Grotius and Whitby. Gen. iv. 7:—"If thou dost evil, sin lieth at the door;"—sin, and for it satisfaction must be made. Gen. xxxi. 39:—"That which was torn of beasts, the sin was upon me;"—whether it was through a greater or less neglect, I bore the responsibility, and satisfied for it. The citations from Job ix. 20, Psalm xxxvii. 33, and xciv. 21, are impertinent. 2 Kings vii. 9:—"We do not well if we tarry till the morning light; then we shall sin;" to wit, against the lives of Israel, shut up in Samaria. Zech. xiv. 19:—"This shall be the sin of Egypt, and the sin of all the nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles;"—that is, the plagues threatened shall be according to the measure of their sin, and satisfaction for it.

In respect to the use of the word, sinner, in the places quoted by Whitby, there are two things to be considered. The first is, that whilst the noun, sin, and its derivatives, to sin, and, a sinner, in their strict acceptation, have respect to the law of God,—the rule of divine morality,—they are sometimes in the Scriptures, and frequently elsewhere, appropriated to express defection from any specified principle or rule of action. Thus we say that he who assumes to himself the entire conversation, sins against the rules of propriety. This language intimates no moral delinquency; but merely a violation of the laws of good breeding. So, when Judah says to his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him. If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me be to thee a sinner forever,"—Gen. xliii. 8, 9;—not only does the whole tenor of the place indicate that the word, sinner, is to be understood in a restricted sense; but it very distinctly indicates what that sense is. Judah states to his father a rule of duty and obligation, according to which he engages to act. He appoints his father to be judge in the case; and engages to abide by the de-

cision which he shall give. Thus, the transaction does not have respect at all to the divine law, and moral delinquency, but to the proposed covenant with his father; and accordingly he does not say, "I will be a sinner;" but, "I will be to thee a sinner." In a certain place, Paul says respecting unknown tongues, "If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh, a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me."—1 Cor. xiv. 11. Were an expositor, in discussing the narrative of Paul's shipwreck and entertainment by the barbarous people of Melita, to appeal to this place, for the purpose of proving that the words, barbarian, and, barbarous people, were not to be understood in their proper sense, it would be very preposterous. And yet, the case in reference to the word, sin, is precisely similar to this. Because Judah uses the word, sinner, in respect to a covenant and pledge of his own proposing to his father, limiting the word to the proposed transaction, by the specific phrase, "to thee,"—therefore the word, when used without limitation or modifying phrase, in respect to the law of God and the apostasy of man, must mean something else than literally it expresses!

The same principle applies to the language of Bathsheba. The matter of which she is speaking does not have respect to the law of God; but, to the supposition that, with the tacit consent of David, Adonijah should inherit the throne of his father. In this case, she and Solomon would have been liable to the charge of treason; in planning to divert the succession from him whom such a result as that supposed would have pointed out and enthroned, as the lawful heir. Thus, she and Solomon would have been sinners against the authority and throne of Adonijah. The language of Jacob to Laban, already quoted, illustrates the same usage:—"That which was torn of beasts, the sin was upon me;"—not, sin against God's law, but short-coming under the contract between him and Laban, by which he was bound to protect the flocks.

The second thing to be observed in respect to the use of the word, sinner, is, that, as these very examples illustrate, the word always indicates real defection from a specified rule. The rule





to which it properly relates is, the law of God. Hence, when applied in any other way, it must be accompanied by some indication of the law to which it has reference,—by something showing it to be used in a peculiar sense, and not in its proper application, as relating to the law of God. In the argument of Paul, it is unquestionably the law of God which is had in view. The word, therefore, in that connection, designates violation of that law; that is, moral delinquency.

The conclusion, which follows from all the facts in the case, is, that,—so far as it from being true, that the word, sin, when used in relation to the law of God, is ever eliminated of the idea of criminality, and used to express mere penal liability,—directly the reverse is true;—the primary conception, always contained in the word, is, crime,—moral turpitude. The penalty is intimated by it, only inasmuch as, in the divine government, punishment is a necessary and universal concomitant of sin. Further, the fact is here brought out, that so inseparably are sin and punishment related, and so necessarily does the latter imply, and grow out of, sin, that, in the origination of the Hebrew tongue, and its adaptation and employment for the reception of the oracles of God, the divine Author of those oracles did not think proper to provide a distinct word, to express punishment. He has made the very structure of the sacred language to proclaim the fact, that, as there can be no sin unpunished, so, there can be no punishment where there is no crime;—the language knows not even how to threaten punishment, without uttering a charge of sin.

The only way in which we can conceive the attempt to be made to evade the force of this argument, is by the assumption *of a sinner* that, although there must be sin in order to the *only punished.* infliction of punishment, it does not necessarily follow that they coexist in the same party. If a creature is punished, it implies that some one has sinned; but does not necessarily intimate the sufferer to be the sinner! To this subterfuge two insuperable objections may be sufficient. The first is, that, as we have seen already, the entire argument of the apostle is predicated upon directly the opposite doctrine; to wit, that

wherever there is punishment it is conclusive proof of sin. Death reigned, from Adam to Moses, over all; therefore, all were sinners. The second is, that it sweeps utterly away the whole doctrine of the Scriptures respecting God's justice. The doctrine involved in the justice of God, and proclaimed in his word, is, that every intelligent creature shall be dealt with in precise accordance with his works, under the provisions contained in the law, and the covenant therein incorporated. That law provides that the sinner, and the sinner only, shall be punished, and that in precise proportion to the enormity of his sins. The covenant engages that the righteous shall have life, the favour of God. We have elsewhere sufficiently shown that, in this matter, there is no neutral position possible,—that he who is not at variance with the law is righteous, and he who is not conformed to it is a sinner. The assumption here controverted is, that he who is not a sinner, at least so far forth as the matter involved is concerned, may be visited with penal inflictions;—that is, he who, by definition, is righteous, may, in violation of the covenant, be visited with the curses which the law defines as peculiar to sin. The alternative is, the denial of God's justice, or the acknowledgment that the sin of Adam is truly and properly our sin. "It cannot justly be imputed to us by God unless in some way it was ours; since 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die.'—Ezek. xviii. 4."\*

If there is any one principle which shines forth on the pages of the Scriptures with a light as of the noonday sun, it is that thus attested. It is, that at the bar of God, every man shall be judged and rewarded in precise accordance with his deserts; which certainly have respect to the attitude of the soul, and its affections, as well as the actions of the life. When the Scriptures speak of the justice of God, the meaning is not obscure or doubtful. We are plainly and abundantly taught that the rule of all his judgments is his law, which is the only criterion of merit or crime;—that there are but two classes of cases recognised at his bar, viz., those who are conformed to the law, or righteous, and those who are not conformed, and are, therefore,

\* Marcii Medulla, Locus vi. 36.





criminals or sinners;—and that God's justice consists in the fact that to these, severally, he will render a reward appropriate and precisely proportionate to their desert. To the righteous will be given life, the blessing of the Lord; and to the unrighteous, the rewards of their unrighteousness. All this is set forth by the apostle, in the beginning of the epistle, as fundamental to his whole argument. He declares that he is "sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things;" and insists that he "will render to every man according to his deeds." See Rom. ii. 2-10. The only exception to the universal principle thus set forth is the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his atoning work. And, unless we are prepared to deny the uniqueness of the person and work of Christ, and the wonderful wisdom, as well as grace, displayed in the plan of redemption, we must admit that this very exception confirms and establishes the rule. In God's own Son, and in him only, shall innocence ever be visited with the inflictions appropriate to crime; and in his people, and in them alone, shall sin ever fail of the curse of God. By the innocent, we mean those who are free from the just impeachment of crime. If the word has any other meaning, we have failed to discover it. The doctrine which we oppose involves the confounding of all moral distinctions,—the infliction on the sinless of the punishment of crime,—the endurance by innocence of the curse of the just and holy One. If this be so, then are we forced to conclude that there is no essential difference between holiness and sin; or else, that, whatever the distinction, the Lawgiver and Judge of all is indifferent to it. God's law is fundamental to all we can know of his moral perfections. And if the penalty of the law can be enforced upon one against whom there stands no criminal charge,—or if, on the other hand, the transgressor can escape without satisfaction to the penal requirements of the law,—then are all moral distinctions obliterated, and the glory of God, the great light of the universe, is lost behind a cloud of utter and eternal night.

The Arminian interpretation is, in fact, not an exposition, but a contradiction, of the apostle. The sin of which they talk

—that is, Adam's transgression so imputed to us as to render us liable to the curse of the law without impeaching us of criminality and charging upon us turpitude,—is not sin at all, but a calamity.

The forcible remarks of a reviewer, respecting Dr. Edward Beecher's figment of "apparent causation," are appropriate here.—"The principle itself is a nonentity. It is a mere phrase. There is no such thing as apparent causation in the sense in which he uses the expression. There are different kinds of causation; efficient, occasional, instrumental, and logical or rational. . . . In every one of these cases the causation is real, though of a very different nature. In all we have an antecedent, standing in the relation of a *sine qua non* to the effect. . . . In every case of causation there is a real connection between the antecedent and consequent, the former being the *sine qua non* of the latter. Dr. Beecher admits the apostle asserts that the sin of Adam stands in a causal relation to the condemnation of his race. Now, it is one thing to inquire into the nature of this causal relation, and another thing to deny it. The former is to explain Scripture, the latter is to contradict it. To say that the causation is merely apparent, that the sin of Adam 'exerted no influence whatever on his race,' as Dr. Beecher does, is no exposition, but a flat contradiction, of the apostle's assertion."\* So, precisely, in the present case. There are sins of omission, and sins of commission; the sin of nature, and actual sins; sins personal, and sins conjunctive or concurrent; sin inherent, and sin imputed. But in all cases, the sin is real, consisting in a real deflection from the line marked by the law; in all cases, the sin is criminal, and the sinner therefore liable to the infliction of wrath. To talk, in respect to God's law, of a sin which is not a crime, and does not produce as its first effect moral turpitude, is contradiction in terms. When therefore the apostle says we are sinners in Adam,—that we sinned in him, and therefore experience the curse,—to say that the sin is not in us criminal, but that the expression indicates a relation of mere liability to punishment, is to contradict this scripture, not to expound it.

\* Princeton Review, 1854, vol. xxvi. p. 118.



The idea that we are not really guilty of Adam's sin, but only liable to be visited with its penalty, involves an utter confounding of the proper distinction between the divine sovereignty and justice. The former may, unquestionably, do what it will with its own. But justice sits in a court of law; and regulates its decrees by fixed and unchangeable principles. Its rule is the perfect law of God. Its requirement is, perfect conformity to that law, deflection from which is sin. If the respondent at its bar is able to acquit himself of sin, he stands justified and free from penal infliction. If sin is by justice imputed, it is for the reason that sin is found to be really there. No man is held to answer for the first sin, as it was Adam's; and if it is not his own, as it is sin or crime, justice will not account it his, as it is a ground of condemnation. In other words, at the bar of justice, things are contemplated in no other light than precisely as they are. Nothing is there held as ground of condemnation, but sin. Nothing is recognised as sin, but deviation from the law. Every deviation, whether in nature or person, is sin; and, as such, is crime; and, therefore, by law and justice condemned.

If it be supposed that the divine sovereignty is competent to constitute me liable to the penalty of Adam's transgression, without impeaching me of the very demerit of the act, the question at once arises, Why does the word of God point continually to the moral relation subsisting between us and Adam, and base the process against us,—not upon the ultimate right of the Creator as sovereign,—but upon the ground of our responsibility at the bar of justice, under the sanctions of law? The whole aspect of the case indicates, that, the divine sovereignty having made us, in Adam,—established a righteous and most excellent law, with its alternate sanctions of life and death,—erected a tribunal,—and ordained justice to the seat of judgment,—the whole interests of man are referred to that tribunal; and mere sovereignty does not interpose.

The Scriptures are, in fact, without a trace of any such principle of divine government, as is implied in an imputation for punishment, of that which is not in the victim as sin. Appeal will be made to the case of the Lord Jesus, bearing the sins of

the world; although in him was no sin. But essential to this case was that divine authority by which he had a native superiority to the law, and power over his own life; and that freedom, by which he honoured the law, in making himself a voluntary subject to its precept and curse, for us. It is certain, that had the sufferings of Christ been involuntary, they would have been a violation of justice, instead of being a signal display of it. The case, then, proves nothing to the present purpose. Our relation to Adam is not pretended to be one of voluntary sponson and substitution. It does not, therefore, come under the same provisions of justice which concern the sufferings of Christ. The question is not, what the infinite grace of the infinite One is competent to do, in assuming to himself the punishment of our sins; but, what the law denounces, and justice demands, against creatures who are unwilling victims of its curse.

The parallel doctrine, in which the righteousness of Christ is, by free gift, made really ours, in order to justification, renders it necessary that Adam's sin should be really ours, in order to our being condemned in it. Whitby seeks to evade the force of the argument, by denying that the active obedience of Christ is included in the matter of our justification. The logical connection of the two elements of the Arminian system is evident; and if it be true that we are not clothed with Christ's active obedience, as well as with the merits of his sufferings,—if we are merely by his death freed from the curse,—it then, by parity of reasoning, follows, that we are not involved in the sinfulness of Adam's sin; but only included in the calamity of the curse, by reason of his fall. It will, however, hereafter appear, that they that are Christ's are invested with a full and entire property not only in what he has done and suffered, but in all that, as Mediator, he is, or possesses. They are not pardoned, but justified,—not barely saved from their native penury, but clothed with all his infinite wealth. The bearing of all this, upon our relation to Adam, is evident.

In fact, the whole question here discussed resolves itself into this:—Are we deservedly liable to the penalty of Adam's sin? And, if it be admitted that we are, what then means, deserved





liability? What else can it mean, than that we are morally criminal in the sin? The denial of this involves the assumption that there is some other standard of moral rectitude and crime than the law of God, and some other tribunal of judgment than that of justice decreeing in accordance with that law. It is admitted that the law denounces punishment against us. It is admitted that the infliction is just. And yet it is denied that he who, at the bar of God's law and justice, is thus weighed and found wanting, is morally criminal!

That our sin in Adam is real sin, involving us truly in the charge of its moral criminality, is evident from the effects which flow from it. These are such as attach to real sin, and to that only. They are turpitude, or moral corruption; guilt, or desert of punishment; and punishment. And our gravest objection to the doctrine of constructive sin which we have been examining, consists, not in the exegetical considerations, merely, but in the fact that it is logically incompatible with any doctrine of original sin whatever.

We have already had occasion to observe a law of representation which runs through the Scriptures, and is developed especially in the cases of the headship of Adam to the race, and the believer justified in Christ. That principle we have stated to be, that "community in a propagated nature constitutes such a oneness as immediately identifies the possessor, in the relations of that nature in the progenitor whence it springs." This principle seems to be but one particular, under the general proposition that continuity of organic force constitutes identity, in any substance, whether material or spiritual. In this expression, we consider an organism as a substance, simple or compound, clothed with its distinctive forces, constituting it an efficient cause; and by the phrase, continuity of organic force, we design to intimate that, in whatever direction those forces flow, and to whatever extent, they operate to bind the substances upon which they act in a relation of identity. By, identity, is, of course, not meant absolute numerical oneness, in all respects; but that of which, to given purposes, the same proposition may be predicated immediately

and *per se*. Thus, we have no assurance that the body of the aged man contains, among all its material elements, a particle which was in it in his infancy. The identity is predicated upon the continuous operation of those vital forces which have pervaded and built it up, repaired its breaches and determined its character. So, too, of the tree or the rock, the star or the system. Again, all identities are not of the same order; as there is, for example, a distinct identity belonging to each limb of the body, and another, of a higher grade, common to them all, in the unity of the body. These grades of identity are determined by the degree to which the subordinate substance is pervaded and controlled by the organic forces whence the identity is predicated. Thus, forces which are common to the solar system give it an identity of one grade, comprehending in it, not only the planets in their mass, but every organism, and every atom, belonging to any of them; all of which are embraced in the common forces of gravitation, repulsion, and so on. On the other hand, each particular planet has its more intimate identity, constituted by the addition to the forces which it possesses in common with the others, of those which operate more immediately upon its own materials. So may we trace a growing intimacy of identity, until we come to the indivisible molecules.

So it is in the moral and spiritual world. By one Spirit are believers all baptized into one body. By this baptism, no one loses the identity of his own person; but, "by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," he is introduced into a higher identity,—identity in Him "from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 16. It is thus, by the pervasive power of the Spirit of Christ moulding and controlling the whole, that the identity is wrought, of which Christ so remarkably says,—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us. . . . That they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."—John xvii. 21-23.



Parallel to this, is the identity which we sustain to the first Adam. By birth we acquire a distinct and separate personality, having an identity of its own, of the same grade and degree as was that of Adam's person. But with this distinct personality there is associated a community in Adam's moral nature, by virtue of the continuity of forces flowing from him to us, embracing us in an identity with his nature, and involving our communion in his apostasy from God. Hence, the Scripture forms of expression, of our being in him, sinning in him, and dying in him.

The sin of Adam was an act in its own nature transient, and, when past, left in him nothing but the criminality or desert of punishment, the defilement and depravity of nature, and the consequent condemnation under the curse. These all, by virtue of our identity of nature with him, are ours. "God created man righteous, and was the author of his nature, though not of his sins. But he, having spontaneously depraved himself, and become justly condemned, generated a depraved and condemned offspring. For we were all in that one man, who fell into sin through the woman who was made of him before the sin, when he, one, corrupted all. The form in which we as individuals live was not yet created and distributed to us severally, but the seminal nature was created, from whence we were propagated; which nature itself, being by sin vitiated, bound in the chains of death, and justly condemned,—man was begotten of man in no different estate; and through this channel, by the bad use of free will, the series of those calamities has originated which have accompanied the race,—thus depraved in its origin, and, as it were, corrupted in the root,—even to the eternal perdition of the second death,—those only excepted who, by the grace of God, are freed from the bond of misery."<sup>\*</sup>

It is objected that, if we are in fact guilty of the crime of Adam's sin, as here asserted, then are we under obligation to realize contrition and penitence for it; but that this is impossible, inasmuch as we are entirely unconscious of the sin. Were it impossible to reply to

29. *Contrition  
due for the  
apostasy.*

\* Augustinus De Civitate Dei, Lib. xiii. 14.

this objection, it would not trouble us, because it is an appeal to carnal reason from the testimony of the word of God. But, in fact, the objection presents no difficulty that does not arise from misapprehension; for, in the first place, it is not the province of consciousness to take cognizance of the past. That is the office of reason, resting on testimony; and, of memory. I am unable, in any way, to recall a tithe of the sins of my past life. Will it, therefore, be held, that the criminality of them does not attach to me? I may be convinced, by sufficient evidence, of the fact that, in my childhood, I committed a given act of sin. Am I, therefore, excusable from the guilt of it, and the duty of heart-felt contrition for it, because I search the tablets of memory in vain for any trace of the sin? But consciousness is not so entirely silent, as some may imagine, in respect to this first all-embracing sin of Adam; and the only reason why any doubt is felt, among God's people, on the subject, is, that they do not carry with them, always, a distinct apprehension of that in which the sin consisted. We have shown, already, that the plucking and eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree was a mere accident, following the heart-sin;—an act, indeed, sustaining immensely important relations; but yet to be distinguished carefully from the cardinal matter, of which it was the evidence and seal. The sin was, apostasy of man's nature from God; apostasy, by the force of which Adam was impelled into the act of transgression, as an inevitable consequence of the state of heart constituted by the apostasy. Now, let it be carefully observed that apostasy is an act, not a habit; and, on the other hand, depravity and corruption is a habitual state, and not an act. The difference between regeneration and sanctification is not more clear nor important than that between apostasy and the depravity which it produces; and precisely as regeneration is an act which, once done, is finished and can never be repeated, so apostasy can occur but once. That once was when the nature of man—the nature of the race—revolted, in the person of the father of the race. We only further ask, whether it is possible that any child of God can fail to be self-condemned, as guilty, not merely of habitual depravity, but of apostasy. Is there one who fails to realize,





in contrition before God, that there is abundant proof within of a departure from holiness, which is in him a crime deserving God's wrath, and which is the cause of his depravity and of his actual sins?

In order to an intelligent and right answer to this question, let us consider the nature of the emotions respecting sin which arise in the heart of one taught by the Spirit of God. Perhaps that which most commonly arrests the attention, is the external forms of transgression. He finds himself in a position of actual outward conflict with the holy law of God. But conscience does not long stop here. The outward deeds are traced to a depravity of nature, which is their active cause, and the spring of their enormity; and the testimony of conscience is that the deed is evil because of its evil source. It is only after such views that the soul can realize the meaning and join in the earnestness of Paul's anguished cry, "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But let us trace the matter yet a little further. Is the feeling thus realized one of conscious guilt merely for the fact that depravity acts? Or is it not, when traced to its ultimate principle, a consciousness of responsibility, criminality and condemnation before the bar of conscience and of God, for the fact that the depravity exists? The person may never have heard of Adam and the apostasy; or, if he have, the subject may not assume the form of conscious relation to Adam, and guiltiness in his sin. How or when he became depraved, he may not know. But this one thing he does know;—in respect to it, the teachings of conscience are unambiguous,—that the depravity which is in him is not proper to him, as he is a creature of God; that it came not from the hand of his Maker, but is contrary to his law, at variance with his holiness, and is hostility to him. That its origin is not of God, he realizes with an intensity of assurance which nothing can move; and that it is of himself, he is equally conscious. Of the date of that origin he knows nothing, except that its existence is parallel with his being; but, that its occurrence is in him a criminal fact is as surely attested within, as, that its fruits are his crimes. In fact, it is only in this consciousness of crimi-

nality for the fact that depravity exists, that conscience finds the fulcrum, upon which to ply the charge of crime in actual sins. It is because immanent depravity is our crime,—recognised as such by conscience,—that active depravity and actual sins are so recognised; since these are the effects, flowing by a natural necessity from the other.

Of the principles here stated, an instructive illustration presents itself in the case of Dr. Goodwin, a member of the Westminster Assembly. Speaking of his own conversion, he says, "An abundant discovery was made unto me of my inward lusts and concupiscence, and I was amazed to see with what greediness I had sought the gratification of every sin.' He had now," says the historian of the Westminster Assembly, "such a view of the root and fountain of his iniquity, that he ceased from going about to establish his own righteousness,—which he never before had done. He had such a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of his sins that he 'abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes.' He was humbled under God's mighty hand. He was deeply convinced 'that in him—that is, in his flesh—dwelt no good thing.' And after tracing his corruption to its source, he found it to have originated in the first sin of man; that in him all had sinned, agreeably to that of Paul, 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed on all men, because that all have sinned.' 'This,' says he, 'caused me necessarily to conceive that it was the guilt or demerit of that one man's disobedience that corrupted my nature. Under such apprehensions as these did my spirit lie convicted of this great truth, that, being gone to bed some hours before, I arose out of bed, being alone, and solemnly fell down before God, the Father of all the family in heaven, and did of my own accord assume and take upon me the guilt of that sin, as truly as any of my actual sins.'"\* Taught by such an experience, Goodwin subsequently wrote, on the subject before us, that, "as to corruption of nature, that comes to be a sin only as it refers to an act of sin, which caused it. If, therefore, that corruption become truly and properly a sin in us, as well as in

\* History of the Westminster Assembly. Board of Pub., 1841, p. 273.





him, (Adam,) he must necessarily be constituted a public person, representing us, in respect of that very act of sin; for it is not the want of righteousness simply which is sin, but as relating to a forfeiture and losing of it, which they are *first* guilty of who lose it."\*

But few convicted sinners have the power of analyzing their own exercises, so as to trace the depravity of their nature to the criminal act of depravation, and to locate that in the apostasy of Adam. But the process is, in all cases, essentially the same. Actual sins are traced to a depraved nature; and that depravity is referred to a depravation, of which, whatever be the history, we are the consciously criminal authors. Is the matter, of which the awakened conscience has such an intense apprehension, any thing else than that apostasy of which our nature was guilty, in the person of Adam? If it be not that, what else is it?

Near akin to the objection just noticed is another, which urges, that the view here presented is inconsistent with a proper sense of personal responsibility. How it should be so, does not appear. Every one is conscious of a just accountability for all personal sins. For every crime I may have committed, from the cradle until now, it is, on all hands, agreed that I am righteously bound to answer. Upon what principle? Is it because the sin proceeded from causes extrinsic to my nature? No, but directly the reverse;—because my nature is the sole cause of the act; and the cause of it, in such a way, as to prove itself depraved. Just in proportion as influences are admitted to operate, which are extraneous to and independent of my nature, is the burden of my responsibility lightened. And if it be once proved that the given act did not proceed from depravity in my nature, I am at once released from all impeachment of crime. Thus, then, it appears that my conscious responsibility for the acts of my person is not, merely, as they are personal actions; but, as they are the proofs and outflowings of the depravity of my nature. Further, this responsibility is not because of any causative relation of my person to that depravity. It was not originated by my person, nor in it.

\* Goodwin's Works, vol. iii. p. 16.

Nor is it aroused, nor in any way excited or modified, by my person. On the contrary, it is the controlling power, to which my person is enslaved,—possessing all my faculties, ruling all my actions, and infecting all with its malign influence. The responsibility, therefore, of which all are conscious, in respect to personal sins, when analyzed, proves to attach, not to the mere action of unlawfulness, but to the depravity of the nature;—a depravity antedating personal existence, and only voluntary to me, as a person, in the sense that it has seized and controls my will, as well as all my other powers. In other words, it belongs to my nature, and is therefore a characteristic of my very being. Thus, it appears that conscience, under the unerring teaching of the Creator who planted it in the soul, and of the Spirit who quickens it, in convincing of sin, lays comparatively little stress upon the merely personal aspects of sin; employing them, mainly, as the demonstrations of the moral condition of the nature. And so far is it from being true, that the view which we present,—of the responsible and criminal relation which we sustain to the sin of Adam,—tends to induce confused and inadequate views of the evil of sin and our responsibility for it, directly the opposite effect is induced. Every truly convicted sinner realizes the meaning and the propriety of David's bitter cry, when the hidden depths of his apostate nature were disclosed to him. His actual sins were enormous. But that to which he refers them all, and which excites the deepest emotion within him, was the depraved source, pervasive of his being, whence they flow:—"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm li. 5.

In respect to actual sins, there are but three possible theories of their origin. To these are appropriate corresponding estimates of their enormity. According to one view, man's nature is not originally depraved,—the moral attitude of his soul is not natively such as necessarily to imply deeds of sin. These, therefore, are mere accidents of his person, which do not lay hold of the depths of his being,—which do not imply any intense or pervasive moral evil in the soul. This, be it observed, is the theory which most thoroughly limits the charge of sin to the



individual personality. According to it, the whole origin and cause of sin is found in, and limited to, the person of the several individual. If, therefore, the objection, which we are now considering, be valid, we may expect this theory to induce the most intense apprehension of the evil of sin, and consciousness of personal responsibility for it. The second view is that which holds the sin of Adam to be foreign to us, so far as its criminality is concerned; but asserts that sin to have been the cause or occasion of a depravation of our nature, for which, although in its origination we are not morally chargeable, yet in its existence and action we are. This depravity, thus arising in us, and thus chargeable upon us, is the cause of all actual sins. That which is the distinctive characteristic of this view is the fact, that, in the last resort, it traces all sin in us to an innocent natural necessity. Adam's apostasy, which is denied to be our crime, is nevertheless the cause of our depravity and sinfulness. Or,—according to a different phase of the theory,—the cause of our depravity, whence our sins arise, is found in the judicial power of God, visiting us with this as the punishment of a sin which we are not required either to acknowledge or repent of! How far such a theory is calculated to induce a deep sense of God's holy abhorrence of sin, and our own just responsibility for our wickedness, the reader may judge. The third view, which we hold to be that of the word of God, traces all our actual sins back to a depravity, the cause of which was the wicked apostasy of our nature from God, in the person of Adam;—an apostasy in which we are as truly criminal as Adam was; because, the nature by which it was committed is as really in us as in him. Of its identity, it gives abundant pledges, in its alien attitude, and unholy fruits. Thus does this view hold us guilty of personal sins, which have no apology in an innocent cause;—sins whose enormity is estimated by the evil of the apostasy, of which they are the native and proper fruits. Not only does it charge our sins upon us, as persons; but traces these to our nature,—the fountain of our being; which it condemns, under the just accusation of being a party in that wicked apostasy, which “brought death into the world, and all our woe.” In this doctrine, whilst we are to be

regarded, on the one hand, as individual persons, that does not cover the whole case; but, we are the branches of one vine,—the partners of one blood,—the members of one body. That vine is degenerate. That blood is corrupted. That body is apostate. And the guiltiness, which attaches to our persons, not only implies the fact that we are personally corrupt and sinful, but involves the prior fact, that the nature, in us, which is thus revealed corrupt and criminal, is so, essentially and in all its aspects and history. The crimes which it produces in our persons, are but the outflowing of that same malignant evil, which has been characteristic of it in all the generations of men. The depravity which we realize, is the putrid stream, whose poisonous waters flow from the fount of apostasy, in the person of the first man,—an apostasy, which, if of *his* nature, was of the nature which we derive from him, *our* nature;—an apostasy, which, if, in him, it was the cause of depravity and sin, is a similar cause in us;—an apostasy, which, if it brought him under condemnation, not only for the deed itself, but for the corruption thence flowing, and the many crimes thereby caused, is, in us, burdened with the same infinite and righteous curse,—first, for the initial crime, the cause and measure of all the rest; and, thence, for the unholiness and transgression which proceed from it.

Which of these schemes tends the most to honour the holiness, the justice, the goodness and truth of God,—which is best calculated to induce the most distinct and adequate sense of individual responsibility, and of the evil of sin,—the reader will judge. Which corresponds best with the corrupt dispositions of men, it is easy to decide. Any scheme which palliates the intrinsic evil of the depravity of man's nature, and the just responsibility to which he is held as the criminal author of his own corruption, will be gladly embraced by a nature which loves darkness. Long ago did the Pharisees exemplify how pleasing the delusion of washing the outside of the cup and platter, and admiring its glittering show, heedless of the uncleanness and corruption that ferment within.

The opinion seems to be entertained by some, that the attempt





to base our relation to the covenant and to the apostasy upon our natural relation to Adam involves, as a logical result, the doctrine of mediate imputation. This appears to be the idea of a distinguished reviewer of Breckenridge's Theology. Attributing to Dr. Breckenridge the opinion to which he excepts this writer says, "We are aware that the doctrine of Dr. B. is the doctrine of Calvin, and that the chapter in our Confession of Faith, 'Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof,' may be interpreted in the same sense; but the teaching of the Catechisms we take to be clearly and unambiguously on our side. There the imputation of guilt is direct and immediate, and the true explanation of the degraded condition of the race."\*

That Calvin and the Confession base the imputation of Adam's sin upon our natural relation to him, is unquestionable. The Catechisms, more briefly, intimate the same thing; and we understand Dr. Breckenridge in that sense. In the admirable work to which these strictures have reference, he says, "There are two great facts, both of them clear and transcendent, which unitedly control the case. The *first* is, that Adam was the natural head and common progenitor of his race. The human family is not only of one blood, as has been proved in another place, but the blood of Adam is that one blood. The whole Scriptures are subverted, and human life is the grossest of all enigmas, if this be not true. If it be true, nothing is more inevitable than that whatever change may have been produced on the whole nature of Adam by his fall, before the existence of any of his issue, must have been propagated through all succeeding generations. If there is any thing perfectly assured to us, it is the steadfastness of the order of nature in the perpetual reproduction of all things after their own kind. If the fall produced no change on the nature of Adam, it could produce none on the nature of his descendants. If it did produce any change upon his nature, it was his nature thus changed, and not the form of his nature before his fall, which his posterity must inherit." "The *second* of the two great facts alluded to is, that Adam was the

\* Southern Presbyterian Review, vol. x., Jan., 1858, p. 616.

federal, the representative, the covenanted, head of his race, as well as its natural head." "There is, doubtless, a wide difference between imputed sin and inherent sin. We, however, have both, and that naturally; and it tends only to error to attempt to explicate either of them, in disregard of the other, or to separate what God has indissolubly united, namely, our double relation to Adam. It is infinitely certain that God would never make a legal fiction a pretext to punish as sinners dependent and helpless creatures who are actually innocent." "We must not attempt to separate Adam's federal from his natural headship,—by the union of which he is the *root* of the human race; since we have not a particle of reason to believe that the former would ever have existed without the latter. Nay, Christ, to become our federal head, had to take our nature."\*

So far is it from being the fact that the dependence of the federal upon the natural headship involves the mediate imputation of Adam's sin, directly the reverse is the case. If our relation to the covenant is founded on our natural relation to Adam,—if we are, at the bar of God, held to have sinned in him because the nature that is in us flowed to us from him,—it immediately follows that the responsibilities thence derived are the same in their order in us as they were in Adam. If his nature was first guilty of apostasy and then of consequent depravity and sin, it will be so as it flows to us. This doctrine is so entirely consistent with that of immediate imputation, that De Moor, after devoting twenty-one pages to the refutation of Placeus, plants himself, in harmony with Marck, upon our very position as the ground of defence against the objections of those who denied immediate imputation. "It is objected that the justice of God will not admit the imputation of the sin of another. The answer is, in our author [Marck]: Justice will not, indeed, permit the imputation of the sin of another which is entirely and in every sense alien to him to whom it is imputed. Yet it fully approves of the imputation of a sin which is so committed by another that there nevertheless intervenes a

\* Breckenridge's Knowledge of God Objectively Considered, pp. 487, 488, 498, 499.



certain communion of him to whom it is imputed with the immediate author of the sin. And this communion may be of three kinds: either (1) voluntary, such as is between a criminal and his surety, in which case previous consent is necessary: thus the sins of the elect were imputed to Christ, who voluntarily became surety for them, (Isa. liii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 21): or (2) natural, such as is between a father and his children; (Ex. xx. 5): or (3) political, such as is between a king and his subjects. In the second and third modes of this communion, it is not necessary that he to whom the sins of another are imputed should first give his actual consent. This twofold communion, natural and moral or political, holds between us and Adam, as he was the father of us all and the prince and representative head of the whole human race. He was not a private but a public and representative person, in whom the law of nature and the command which was the test of obedience were proposed to the whole human nature; and who apostatizing, the whole human nature at the same time fell in that one individual representative person, (in *ipsa illa persona representativa*), whence that universal apostasy is deservedly imputed to the whole nature of man."\*

"It is objected, that the sin of Adam was a single act, past long before we had existence. But the crime was common, since in the single act of Adam's sin were included the universal transgression of all men, and violation of all law. And hence, the stream of guilt remains, although the act has passed; as, for example, the guilt of a murder abides although the crime may have been committed twenty years ago. It is objected, that, in this case, the guilty person is supposed to remain; but Adam is long since dead. But we all became guilty in Adam. Since we were existing in his loins, in him we also sinned. (Cum in lumbis ejus existentes, in ipso quoque peccavimus.)"†

A single additional paragraph will illustrate the weapons which De Moor uses in refuting Placeus. "We listen with pleasure to Hoornbeek, expounding this subject:—'Do you ask

\* De Moor upon Marck, esp. xv. § 82. Lugd. Batav. 1765, Pars iii. p. 284.

† Ibid. p. 285.

whence this sin is in us? The answer is at hand:—From the first common sin of Adam it is imputed to all men descending from Adam. In which view, it is necessary to know what person or condition Adam sustained, and in what manner the whole nature of man is to be accounted to have been so represented and confederated, that whatever he previously was, possessed, or did, is to be esteemed to have belonged to all men, and therefore the whole nature of man to have been in him. Adam was not only an individual person, but in him, as the root, and according to the law of generation, (*et stirpis ratione*), the whole totality of our nature was accounted. This man stood as the root, the source, the head, the fountain, of the whole nature; and this by a double title,—as the natural head from whom the whole nature was to be propagated, (Acts xvii. 26; Gen. ii.)—and as the moral head, in whose obedience or disobedience our universal nature stood or fell in an equal fortune with his. From the former is derived our nature; from the latter, its moral attitude. From the one it is that we are men; from the other, that we are such men, whether good or evil."\*

It is objected, that we did not sin and fall in Adam as he was the natural root of mankind; else it might be said that all sin because their immediate parents have sinned. To § 12. *Adam's* this, Dickinson justly replies, "As Adam was but *sin, and those* of our parents. once, and none of his descendants were at all, in a state of trial for confirmation and establishment in original righteousness and happiness; so, that covenant could be but once broken, either by himself or his posterity. We could not be guilty of original sin, in Adam, but only when he himself was guilty of it by eating the forbidden fruit. We are guilty, not merely as descendants from Adam, but as being naturally, as well as legally, in him when he violated the first covenant. We were, it is true, in the loins of our immediate parents during all their transgressions of God's law, as well as in the loins of Adam when he broke this covenant; but we could not be, in them, as we were in him, guilty of violating any terms of establishment in life and peace; for there were no such terms made

\* De Moor upon Marck, *ut supra*, p. 267.





with them. And, therefore, we could not, in them, forfeit a confirmation in a state of life and happiness, which was never proposed to them, either for themselves or us; nor could we, in them, bring upon ourselves the dreadful consequences of such forfeiture in our death and ruin.\* The point here considered is important, and the objection may be embarrassing to some of our readers. We therefore add these considerations:—

1. The objection implies, and arises out of, a misapprehension as to what it is in which that sin of Adam, which is imputed to us, consisted; as though it were the mere personal action of plucking and eating the forbidden fruit. This misapprehension has probably given rise to more objections to the doctrine of original sin, and been the consequent occasion of more errors on the subject, than any other doctrinal cause. Hence the objection, that we cannot feel remorse and penitence for this sin; and hence the consequent denial that, as imputed to and punished in us, it is crime. The primary,—the fundamental,—the original sin, is to be sought in the depths of man's nature,—in the hidden recesses of Adam's heart, unseen by any eye but that of his Maker. It consisted in revolt,—in apostasy from God. The action of plucking and eating the fruit was, in itself, as a mere act, a matter utterly insignificant. Its whole importance consists in the fact that, to finite intelligences, and to man himself, it detected the heart apostasy, and sealed the curse of God, incurred by that apostasy. Now, this sin of apostasy, though an act, is an act of such a nature as does not admit of repetition. It is like a fall, which should plunge a man irrecoverably to the very bottom of a precipice, or the profoundest depths of a gulf. He may, he must, remain fallen. But, to fall again, is impossible. Adam's sons are, and can but be, apostate. But, to suppose them anew to commit the deed, is, to suppose them to be still upright.

2. There are two classes of actions, which, in this objection, are confounded; but which should be carefully distinguished. Of these, one consists in such personal actions as result from the fact that the nature is of a given and determinate character.

\* Dickinson on the Five Points, Presb. Board of Pub., p. 110.

These in no respect change the nature; nor indicate any change occurring in it; but constitute mere criteria by which the character and strength of its attributes may be known. After their occurrence, the nature flows on, unchanged, to posterity; conveying to them not the transient accidents which have thus arisen from it, but itself as essentially it is. To this class belong all those sins of our intermediate ancestors, which are here objected to us. These in no wise modify the nature; nor are they the fruits of any change taking place in it, as inherited by them; but are the evidences and fruits of its being what it is, in the persons by whom they are wrought; and to whom, therefore, they attach. The other class consists of such agency, as, springing from within, constitutes an action of the nature itself, by which its attitude is changed. The single case referrible to this class, is that of apostasy,—the voluntary self-depravation of a nature created holy. Here, as the nature flows downward, in the line of generation, it communicates to the successive members of the race, not only itself thus transformed, but, with itself, the moral responsibility which attaches inseparably to it, as active in the transformation wrought by it, and thus conveyed.

3. There is a great truth involved in the objection; although unapprehended by those who urge it. Had Adam—made as he was—been placed on probation without limit as to time, and had he remained upright, whilst one of his posterity became apostate, the crime and corruption thus introduced would have flowed to the family of the apostate; precisely as that of Adam does to us his seed. This is not the place to point out the wisdom and goodness of God, in choosing the dispensation under which man actually is, rather than that here supposed. But that is the only case, in which sin like Adam's,—apostasy,—could have been predicable personally of any of our intermediate ancestry.

In short, “the sin of the world” which Adam committed and Christ came to take away,—apostasy,—the embrace of corruption, and rejection of holiness,—once wrought, is finished. The original action of apostasy begets a state of depravity and corruption, which abides. But the originating act cannot be repeated. The nature once revolted is revolutionized.





## CHAPTER XVII.

### ORIGINAL SIN INHERENT—NATIVE DEPRAVITY.

THE fact of man's actual depravity admits of no question. It is asserted in the Scriptures. It is attested by all experience.

§1. *Pelagian and Socinian admissions.* And so overwhelming is the evidence, as to wring from the most reluctant lips, ample testimony to its universality, its odious character and its power.

Of this, we have seen an instructive example in the case of Dr. Edward Beecher. Compelled by the irresistible evidence of this truth, and misguided by an inveterate hostility against the doctrine of original sin, he takes refuge in the Platonic dream of pre-existence. Of the proof of man's deplorable depravity, Dr. Beecher says, "Indeed, so plain are the mournful realities, that the most eminent Unitarian divines do not hesitate to state them, with an eloquence and power which cannot be resisted. That I may avoid even the appearance of exaggeration, I will state the facts in the words of such men as President Sparks, Professor Norton, Dr. Burnap, and Dr. Dewey."\*

After exhibiting the testimony of these writers, he describes the style in which the subject is treated by orthodox divines. "To illustrate their ideas of the activity and power of this depraved nature, they resort to the most striking material analogies. It is like a glowing furnace, constantly emitting flames and sparks; a fountain, sending out polluted streams. It is a seed or seed-plot of sin. Original sin, by which it is thus corrupted, is a stain or infection pervading all the powers of the soul. It is a noisome root, out of which do spring most abundantly all kinds of sin. . . . Nor does their language convey an idea at

all too strong, of the fearful power of the actual developments of human depravity, in the history of this world,—even as stated by Unitarians,—or of the great truth, that there must be in man some adequate cause, before action, of a course of action so universal, so powerful, so contrary to right, to the natural laws of all created minds, and to his own highest interests."\*

No more unexceptionable evidence could be desired, as to the force of the facts, to command the recognition of the most unjust. §2. *The facts of the case.* willing, and overcome the partiality of the most prejudiced. But all these fall utterly short of an adequate exhibition of the intensity and depth of the depravity of man. The wars and violence, the sensuality, the oppressions, the anger, drunkenness and adultery, incendiarism and murder, upon which Pelagian and Socinian writers dilate, are but the accidental and comparatively trivial consequences, which flow from that, in which the depravity essentially consists. There are two tables to the law. The crimes here enumerated belong to the second,—assailing the rights of our neighbours, and violating the duties which we owe to ourselves. But "the first and great commandment of the law is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." It is in the violation of this commandment that men's depravity originates and is pre-eminently displayed. And it is not among the least of the illustrations of that depravity, that they are so ready to magnify the evil of crimes against each other, and to slight and overlook those against the Most High. The essential and distinguishing characteristic of man's depravity is, hatred to God and to that holiness which constitutes his glory and the creatures' likeness to him.

We have shown that the object of God in giving existence to the creatures, was to concentrate them around himself, and to exercise in them, and reveal to them, his attributes and perfections. He set himself as the great end of all his works. We have seen it to be infinitely right, that thus it should be; and not only right, but perfectly consistent with designs of infinite

\* Conflict of Ages, p. 52.

\* Conflict of Ages, p. 70.



goodness to the creatures; and constituting in fact the best, most glorious and most effectual means to the accomplishment of such designs. If a creature ever be happy, it is, from the very nature of the case, necessary, to that end, that his blessed Creator be

"The circle where his passions move,  
And centre of his soul."

Now, it is apparent, that every principle of reason, honour and gratitude demands that we, whose pulsations each are impelled by God, and who are not only indebted to him for our being, at first, but are each moment debtors to his immediate sustaining hand for the gift of that moment's existence, should gladly recognise, and render grateful acknowledgment of, the debt, by using the moments thus numbered out, as the Giver requires,—in his service and for his glory, in which our highest happiness lies. It is equally clear, that—being indebted, besides existence, for the privilege of occupying and using a portion of God's other creations—we are bound, if we would not be robbers of God, to use them according to the will and for the honour of Him who lends them to us. Still further, when we consider our own habitual unfaithfulness, and shortcoming, in these things, and observe the long-suffering and forbearance of God, in withholding the punishment, which we have thus incurred, an untold and immeasurable obligation rests upon us. Yet more, when we add, that, not only is judgment withheld, and perdition postponed, but salvation and glory in heaven, in the very presence and bosom of God, are pressed upon us, with the tenderest love, and the most gracious importunity,—a salvation and glory, purchased for us at the amazing price of the incarnation and dying agonies of the Son of God,—what a debt is here! By what overwhelming arguments does God challenge our all! What is there that we ought not to be willing to do? What have we, whether of powers or possessions, which we should not gladly and fully surrender to him? Do not such considerations demand, that this whole world should be one vast temple; every human heart an altar, on which should smoke the perpetual sacrifice of love and self-consecration; and every tongue a harp, pouring forth un-

ceasing strains of adoring and admiring thanksgiving and praise?

But how different the reality which the world exhibits! Satan, in his impious rebellion, thrust himself into the place of pre-eminence,—setting up his own will and pleasure as the supreme law, and himself as his ultimate and only end. Thus, not only is he apostate from holiness and the Holy One,—but, with a mad ambition, the Adversary aims to usurp the throne and sceptre of God. With vaulting wickedness, he demands even of the Son of God the homage of worship and the bended knee; and claims, as his own, all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory. This atrocious example man follows; and enrolls himself under Satan's banner. So far from making God our chief good, and his glory our chief end, "God is not in all our thoughts;"—we forget him altogether. Instead of recognising with gratitude his right to the time, which his goodness gives, and his mercy prolongs,—we spend it according to our own pleasure, and for our own purposes. Instead of owning, with reverent awe, his sovereignty and power, and the holiness and authority of his law,—we treat his authority with indifference, transgress his law, without hesitation, and incur his curse, without dread. When he sent his own Son, to recall men, from their mad and wicked apostasy, back to his knowledge and allegiance, he, whose presence on earth was the pledge of the infinite love and the condescending compassion of a God,—he, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, full of grace and truth,—whose countenance beamed with love,—whose life was one story of beneficence,—and whose lips, speaking as never man spake, told of the reopened way to God's favour, and a forfeited heaven,—was pursued with an unrelenting hate, which rested not till it had tracked him to the garden of agony, and exulted over his dying cry as he expired on the cross. And when his ambassadors are sent forth to proclaim the amazing mystery of God's love to man, which presided over all that scene of sorrow and blood, and through it provided salvation to the murderers, and redemption for a world,—when men are invited to forsake the alliance of Satan; to turn from the ways of sin and death; to enlist them-





selves among the followers of that Captain of salvation, and march under the blood-sprinkled banner, to the recovery of the world, for God and his Christ,—they listen with cool indifference, or mock, or murder, the heralds and followers of the crucified One. And yet, whilst occupying this very attitude, men will cavil, and deny the total depravity, the utter evil, of the nature of man!

As to the precise purport of the doctrine of the Scriptures on this subject, there are several things which it is necessary to particularize.

1. The doctrine does not involve any change in the substance of the soul, induced by the fall. This would imply a power equal to that of the Creator, to have been operative at the time of the transgression. It is competent to creatures to produce changes in the modes of existence of things. As, for example, man can cause water to assume the form of steam. But to change the essence of a simple substance,—and such is the soul,—implies a power to alter the very thing which God made; which is, in other words, to destroy his creature, and put something else in its stead. It is not necessary to dwell upon this point, as the doctrine is not, as far as we are aware, held by any. It is only here mentioned, on account of the disposition of Pelagians to represent it as the doctrine of the orthodox confessions. Hence the cry against the idea of “physical depravity,” and similar artifices, which excite prejudice, and darken the truth.

2. A popular form of error, on the subject of original sin, consists in representing man's native moral condition as characterized by the mere absence of holiness. His corruption is not a positive quality, but merely negative. On this subject, the late Dr. Stuart, of Andover, says, “I believe that the susceptibility of impression from sinful and enticing objects belongs to the *tout ensemble* of our nature,—not to the body exclusively, nor to the soul exclusively, but, from their essential, and intimate and wonderful connection, to the *tout ensemble* of both,—i.e. to man. I believe this susceptibility is innate, connate, original, natural, native, or whatever else one may please to call it, by way of thus characterizing it. I believe

that it commences with our very being, in a sense like to that in which an oak-tree commences with the acorn. I believe this susceptibility to be such, that just as soon as there is growth and maturity enough for development, it will develop itself in persuading or influencing men—all men—to sin. I believe this to be the natural state of *fallen* man; while, in his original state, before the fall, the predominant tendency of his susceptibilities was just the reverse of what it now is. Now, what more or less than this does the sober and discreet advocate of the doctrine of original sin contend for?”\* Of these “susceptibilities,” he says, “How can we maintain, with any proper consistency and regard to the real nature of man, and the character of God, that our native susceptibilities are *sins*?” He goes on to assert that they were in Adam and the fallen angels before their several apostasies, and that the Son of God had them. “Indeed,” says he, “can we conceive of a nature, truly human, without such a susceptibility? But if Adam, in his original state, had a measure of this susceptibility,—if the Saviour himself, as possessing our nature, had a measure of this,—how are we going to make out a susceptibility of this kind to be in itself *sin*? Was Adam a sinner before his fall? Is He, who know no sin, to be reputed a sinner, because he could feel the power of enticement to sin? These questions do not need a specific answer. Why, then, should we not be consistent here, in theologizing? That which Adam possessed as a constituent of his very nature, before his fall,—that which the Saviour himself possessed, when he was ‘tempted in all points, as we are,’—should not be called, sin. How can we deem it safe, and discreet and proper, thus to employ language? And if it is not, then why should the same thing be called, sin, in infants, at the present time? I grant that the *proportion* of this susceptibility is very different from that which was in Adam and in the Saviour. In the latter, the susceptibilities of impression, or of excitement to action, from objects good and holy, were altogether predominant; in mankind, since the fall, and in their un-renewed state they are just the reverse.”†

\* Amer. Bib. Repos. July, 1839, p. 48.

† Ibid. p. 50.



The susceptibilities of which Dr. Stuart thus speaks, he postulates, to the entire exclusion of any depraved disposition, or any thing which constitutes an efficient cause of sin, as native in the soul of man. And it is a very curious illustration of the inevitable contradiction and absurdity of error, that this writer, in his eagerness to get rid of the idea that any thing can be sin but actions, here involves himself in the preposterous assumption that the sinner is always passive in sinning. The susceptibility which he describes, is an innocent liability to be impelled into acts of transgression by the efficient power of "sinful and enticing objects," which are external to the soul. By the force of these, availing themselves of the susceptibilities, sin is induced, and that, as an unfailling result:—"Man, in his native state, and from the origin of his being, has the germ of nascent susceptibilities of impression by objects that entice to sin; and these will with certainty lead him to sin, as soon as he is capable of knowing a divine law, and of voluntarily disobeying it."\* Now, a susceptibility is altogether a passive thing, and cannot by any process be made any thing but an opportunity for the operation of active causes; and, in the whole of the discussion of Dr. Stuart, the word is used, and the arguments directed, to the exclusion of any depraved disposition,—of any force, in the nature of man, producing sin. We must, therefore, look to some other quarter for the efficient cause. We are thus shut up to the conclusion, that the "sinful and enticing objects" of which our author makes so much account, in his discussion, are forces which operate efficiently, and *per se*, to impel the soul into acts of transgression. The reader will at once recognise the relation which this notion sustains to the doctrine of Edwards, on the subject of motives, and his theory of the propagation of sin, elsewhere examined. The principle, as employed in the present case by the Andover professor, draws after it the immediate and inevitable conclusion that, however men may and must become sinners, by the force of circumstances, they are entirely free from criminality. Sin, according to the theory, is actual transgression of known law; and it is a further

\* Amer. Bib. Repos. July, 1839, p. 49.

principle of the same theology, as we have already seen, that the sinfulness of the act is entirely irrespective of its cause. Thus men are passively borne into acts of transgression, by the force of "sinful objects" externally operating upon their innocent susceptibilities. In this way actions are induced, which, according to the definition, are sins. But, then, it is to be considered that an innocent susceptibility cannot by any process be converted into a criminal thing. No matter how powerfully the sinful objects may have operated upon it,—no matter what amount of sin they may have produced by occasion of it,—the susceptibility remains but a susceptibility to the last, and can by no possible process be infected with the criminality of which it is the passive occasion, any more than is the dagger with the crime of which it has been the instrument. This theory, therefore, not only renders the sinner altogether passive in the commission of sin, but precludes the imputation either of crime or depravity to the most reckless transgressor. For, agency that is merely passive,—and such is that supposed, so far forth as it is sinful,—is not crime in a man, any more than in a weapon; and a susceptibility such as is here supposed can never, by any process, be changed from a passive occasion into an active and efficient cause.

Thus, according to this pretentious but shallow philosophy, we should commiserate the wicked, as the victims of an innocent and fatal necessity, rather than abhor their depravity, and recognise the justice of God in its punishment. We do not here urge the inconsistency of this doctrine with the teachings of the Scriptures. This has been already demonstrated, and will yet further appear in the sequel.

3. There are two categories under which the depravity which infects our nature is usually described. These are,—the want of original righteousness; and, the corruption of the whole nature. They are not, however, to be regarded as two separable items in the case,—two several counts in the indictment; but are merely two distinct aspects in which we may view one and the same thing. The one is the negative, and the other the positive, statement of the case. As a gnarled stick has two faults,—the one, that it is not straight; the other,





that it is crooked,—so man's soul has in it two evils: it is not conformed to the law of God; and it is hostile to that law and to its author. Although, however, there is this inseparable identity in the two aspects of the case, and it is important that their unity be recognised and guarded, still, light will be gained from viewing the subject in these several aspects, and combining the conclusions which result from each.

In exhibiting the image of God, in which Adam was created, his original righteousness was described as consisting in a pre-disposition of his nature to conformity with the will of God, as sovereign,—a symmetry and harmony of all his powers with the law, ready to fulfil its precepts, and inducing works of obedience, so soon as he entered on the sphere of action; and his holiness, as a conformity of all his affections and dispositions to God, as the Holy One. Correlative is the distinction between man's native want of righteousness, and the corruption of his nature. The former has its appropriate aspect toward the law,—the latter, to the nature of the Holy One.

That man's nature is not now conformed to the law of God,—that it is not predisposed to obedience,—we need not pause to prove. On this subject, so conclusive is the evidence of experience, and so unambiguous the teaching of inspiration, that there is entire agreement among those who pretend to reverence the Scriptures; and, even among deists, it is rare to meet with the assertion of the contrary. It is, however, necessary to emphasize the fact, that this want of original righteousness is not a merely negative thing. It is not mere absence of positive goodness. Even viewed in itself, it is actual crime. The law demands conformity. If the nature fail to meet this demand, it stands in a criminal attitude, condemned at the bar of justice. Of this, however, we have already spoken.

But the want of righteousness, although of itself a great moral evil, deserving God's righteous curse, is the mildest aspect of the depravity which is in us. The evil in man's nature consists not in the fact, merely, that his powers fail of conformity to the demands of the law; but that they occupy an attitude of direct and inveterate antagonism to the

*Want of righteousness.*

*Actual depravity.*

law, and its author, the Holy One. The evil is not, merely, that his voluntary actions are sinful. Nor is it, only, that there is an antecedent certainty that they will be such. But it is such a certainty, arising from the fact that the effect is in the cause, and will flow from it. Man's actions are sinful because his very nature is depraved. Whilst the debasing influence is traceable in all the powers of body and soul, especially are the moral faculties, the reason, conscience and will, infected by the malignant power of the apostasy.

The evidences of this depravation appear in the reason, in every aspect of its functions. That unerring discrimination with which, in Adam, it distinguished, with intuitive clearness and certainty, between the truth and error, is gone. Gropping in darkness and incertitude, it accepts falsehood with a facility refused to truth; and, upon foundations of error, rears fabrics of pretentious folly. That loftiness of aspiration which made the great things of God its congenial themes has given place to a proclivity for the unworthy and grovelling. Instead of a pure spirituality, which was exalted above all sensual and fleshly influences, it has become a slave of carnality and a pander to the body. And that spontaneous and unwearying activity, by which once it was characterized, is exchanged for a spirit of self-indulgent indolence and stupidity. In short, the debased condition of man's fallen reason is seen in the gathering gloom of barbarism which enshrouds in its pall those nations which have been longest without the light of God's word; and in the polished sensuality and cultivated ferocity which are the true characteristics of the proudest attainments of unevangelized civilization, whether of olden Greece or of modern Europe and Asia.

Such is the condition of the reason of man in his fallen state,—degraded and enslaved. Its most signal characteristics are, blindness, sensuality, and slothfulness, and proclivity to the dust. Peculiarly is it alien to the light and knowledge of God. Men have “the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”—Eph. iv. 18. “When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but





became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things."—Rom. i. 21–23.

Still more deeply has the apostasy set its impress on the moral sense and conscience. The sense of the beauty of holiness and deformity of sin is utterly lost. On the contrary, to the perverted conscience, evil assumes the guise of good, and sin has more attraction than holiness. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Hence the necessity of that illuminating, as well as transforming, power, of which the people of God are the subjects. "We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."—1 Cor. ii. 12. Not only, thus, is the conscience blind to the truth and beauty of the things of God;—but, whilst unable to shake off the sense of God's rightful authority, and the obligation of his holy law, it wears that consciousness as it were a galling fetter; and is ever disposed to a traitorous forgetfulness of the claims of God, and to encourage the transgressor in dreams of safety from his righteous curse. The wicked blesses himself, and says, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst."—Deut. xxix. 19.

Responsive to the attitude of the fallen nature, the will is apostate and perverse. As the holy affinities which were original in the nature have been discarded, and the opposite embraced, the result is a correspondent bias of the will to that which is evil, and opposition to the good. Hence, the experience of the apostle, who, although renewed in the spirit of his mind, found the remains of his native corruptions so powerful that, when he would do good, evil was always present with him. (Rom. vii. 15–21.) To the same purpose is the challenge with which our Saviour emphasizes the inevitable bent of the will of men to evil:—"O generation of vipers, how can ye being evil speak

good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—Matt. xii. 34. We have elsewhere shown that the depravity which is characteristic of man implies and announces an attitude of his powers, in antagonism to God,—an attitude which of itself constitutes the cause, and determines the infallible certainty of the fact, that his will and actions are in violation of the holy law, and hostile to God. The position of a globe, on the pitch of a declivity, does not more certainly decide its descent to the bottom, than does the attitude which is native to the powers of the soul determine their action in directions contrary to the law and holiness of God.

The doctrine of human depravity we have seen fully developed in the epistle to the Romans. In the following glance, it will appear, that it is not peculiar to that epistle, nor to the writings of Paul.

1. A corruption which includes all men, and all the powers of man, is asserted in the Scriptures. Before the flood, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Gen. vi. 5. And, lest the description might be supposed appropriate to that generation alone, the same language is reiterated, after the deluge, in respect to all subsequent generations:—"I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for (or, though) the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."—Gen. viii. 21. Says the Psalmist, "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Psalm xiv. 1–3. "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live."—Eccles. ix. 3. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"—Jer. xvii. 9. The unregenerate are described as "haters of God,"—Rom. i. 30; "alienated and enemies in their mind, by wicked works,"—Col. i. 21; as "walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air,



the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;"—"having their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind."—Eph. ii. 2, 3.

2. The depravity thus charged upon man, is attributed to him as an original trait. Says Eliphaz, "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, He putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water!"—Job xv. 14. Says the Psalmist, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Ps. li. 5. "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."—Ps. lviii. 3.

3. Man's depravity is referred to his parentage and his nature as its cause. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one."—Job xiv. 4. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 6, 7. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."—Matt. vii. 16–18. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."—Mark vii. 21–23. "Either make the tree good; and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation [or, seed] of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things."—Matt. xii. 33–35.

4. The depravity which is thus natively in men, is represented as justly exposing them to God's vindictive curse; prior to, and irrespective of, their actual sins. "By one man sin entered into the

world, and death by sin; and so to all men death passed through the one in whom all sinned."—Rom. v. 12. "In Adam all die."—1 Cor. xv. 22. Men are "by nature the children of wrath."—Eph. ii. 3.

The ruin into which man is thus fallen is, by him, without remedy. He can neither love God, obey his law, nor trust in <sup>§ 7. Total</sup> Christ when he is revealed. Says our Saviour to <sup>inability.</sup> the Jews, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vi. 44.

Fundamental to any reconciliation of man with God, there must be such an illumination of the understanding, that he shall realize the very truth, the importance and the excellence of the things of God. But, that man is, naturally and in himself, disqualified to apprehend these things, is, constantly and in the most unambiguous manner, asserted in the Scriptures; as we have already seen. In one word, the apostle declares that, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Thus, groping in darkness, and involved in ignorance, men can neither realize the evil of their own condition, the excellency of God, nor the necessity of return to him; nor can they know the way.

But this is not the worst of the evil. Dark as is man's understanding, and perverted as is his conscience, he has sufficient light to bring him under a conscious condemnation for the perversion of his affections from truth and holiness. When God reveals himself in his providence and word, so that men are compelled to a certain recognition of him, they do not love, but hate him. And this our Saviour himself declares to be the condemnation, "that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light."—John iii. 19. Men are "haters of God." They "like not to retain God in their knowledge."—Rom. i. 28, 30.

But where is to be found, in the range of that ability of which men boast, a remedy for vile and perverted affections, and a hostile nature? How shall we persuade the natural man, to delight





in God? Shall we enlarge on his holiness, his justice, his infinite excellence? Alas! these are the very things which the carnal mind both dreads and hates. Describe to it, the pantheon of Greek mythology;—depict the orgies of Babylonian or Cyprian worship, the pleasures of a Mohammedan or Brahminical heaven, and you will arouse responsive emotions. But God, in his true and holy character, the experience of the whole world concurs with the apostle to testify, men dislike to retain in their knowledge; and, to escape from it, they have grieved in the worship of beasts, and loathsome things, and devils. "The carnal mind is enmity;"—and to hope that it may be persuaded to love, is to imagine that in the harsh and jarring notes of hatred there is an under strain of concord and harmony. It is to confound all distinction of the affections,—to suppose that malignity can delight in excellence, and depravity melt into admiring love of holiness. It is not therefore true, that man in his depravity can repent, hate sin, love God, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, or come to him;—expressions, which, so far as the present question is concerned, are identical in their purport. By the fall he not only cast off holiness and embraced corruption, but sealed himself to sin, and to ruin, as their helpless prey. His loss is not an injury, merely; but an utter destruction.

We have entirely disregarded the distinction between natural and moral ability. It has no countenance in the word of God. <sup>§ 8.</sup> "Natural ability." It is founded in an incorrect and deceptive use of language; and is exceedingly dangerous in its practical tendency. It is asserted, that man's inability to obey God consists solely in a perverse inclination; and, in favourite language, it is said that "*cannot*" means "*will not*." Men have even gone so far as to lay down prescriptions, by way of instructing the impenitent how to make themselves new hearts!

The first thing which we here notice is the psychological absurdity of treating the will as though it were something distinct and separate from the substance of the soul. It is supposed to have fallen a prey to the power of sin, whilst the other powers have escaped the infection. Since the will is nothing else than the soul itself, contemplated in reference to its power of

choosing,—and since its determinations are, necessarily and universally, responsive to the nature,—it is absurd, as we have seen it to be unscriptural, to imagine that the will can be corrupt and the other powers remain in their integrity.

Further, it is impossible to reconcile with reverence for the word of God, the assertion, that in its pages, "*cannot*" means "*will not*." Is it so, that the Spirit of inspiration and the Son of God were ignorant of the force of language, and said one thing when they designed another? Or will the no more impious alternative be adopted, that the language is used with design to deceive? A candid examination of such places as John vi. 65, will satisfy the reader that the very design of the statement was to account for the prevalence of the "*will not*" among the unregenerate. "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. . . . Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."—Some of you believe not; and it was in reference to this fact that I stated the reason:—it is,—that no man can come to me of himself.

Should any one be ready to repudiate all these absurd and unscriptural ideas, and yet insist upon the propriety of the distinction between natural and moral ability, we must object, for several reasons.

1. If any fixed significance is to be attached to language, the word "*ability*" expresses competence to accomplish the thing contemplated. By "*natural ability*" is meant, in the view now considered, the fact that man has reason, conscience and will; and is capable of the affections of love, hatred, joy, sorrow, pity, and so on. It is admitted that these are all perverted, and that nothing less than almighty power can restore them to their right attitude. Now, we ask, is it correct use of language to say, that because man has the affection of love,—because he spontaneously loves sin, therefore he has a natural ability, at pleasure, to hate sin and love holiness?—that because, under



certain circumstances, emotions of sorrow instinctively arise, it follows that he has a natural ability to sorrow for sin? It is as though we should say, that one is able to speak, because his vocal organs are perfect in form, though paralyzed. It is as if we should examine the machinery of an engine, and, upon finding each piston and cylinder, each wheel and lever, perfectly shaped and rightly adjusted, assert it to be able to start forward and perform its office, although the motive power is wanting. The most perfect intellectual machine can have no ability to moral action, unless the moral power is attached. And as it is acknowledged that the moral power is wanting in fallen man, ability to right moral action is entirely wanting. The natural faculties must fail, impotent as the palsied tongue, powerless and still as the steamless engine. We cannot properly assert ability, in any case in which full power to do is not present.

2. This lame and untenable conception is logically identified with the doctrine that ability must be commensurate with obligation,—a doctrine, in its turn, immediately leading to the heresy of perfectionism. The command is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." If the doctrine be true, this command involves the assertion of a power in all men to be perfectly conformed to the image of God. They are consistent who have accepted the conclusion, and asserted for themselves the attainment of a sinless state,—of which John says they who claim it "deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them."—1 John i. 8. How different the teachings of the Scriptures, which unfold the eternal law of God, unlimited by the sin and frailty of man! Copied from the perfections of the Holy One, they bear inscribed on every page the righteous mandate, and the inexorable curse, upon "every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them."

3. The distinction indicated by the phrases, "natural and moral ability," is without a shadow of countenance in the Scriptures. They, everywhere, regardless of any such philosophical subtleties, assert man's inability, in the most absolute and unlimited terms. The gratuitous introduction of the phraseology here considered, thus contrary to inspired example, and at vari-

ance with sound reason and the analogy of faith, could not, therefore, but be dangerous. As experience has too fully proved, it is most disastrous,—ensnaring unregenerate souls into a false confidence and fatal hopes, and beguiling the ministry away from the simplicity and truth of the gospel.

The catastrophe of the fall, was, therefore, not only an evil of infinite moral enormity, but still further calamitous, as by it man was plunged in a returnless abyss of iniquity and woe.

We have seen, that when Adam sinned there were two distinct elements inseparably identified in the action,—the apostasy of his heart and nature from God; and, as an immediate and necessary consequence of this, the overt act of transgression. Again, involved as essential and inseparable elements in the apostasy, were the two constituents already pointed out,—the departure from original righteousness, and the corruption of man's nature. Original righteousness was lost, not by an active interposition of God, taking it from the apostate pair; but by virtue of the fact, that the embrace of sin was of itself the casting off of righteousness. To say that man apostatized, is, in other words, to say, that he made himself unrighteous. By the act, he abandoned the attitude of conformity to the law, and assumed that of alienation. The second incident in the apostasy, was the insurrection of the powers of Adam's soul against God, and the assumption of an attitude of enmity toward him. Not as though this was a consequence following after the transgression, and springing out of it. But the apostasy itself was the assuming of a depraved attitude,—the embrace of corruption; and the depravity of his subsequent life was nothing but the apostasy perpetuated:—its turpitude is that of the very apostasy itself. The point which is here of importance, is, that the loss of original righteousness, and the corruption of nature, are not only one and the same thing, viewed under two different aspects, but that they are the very soul and essence of the apostasy itself,—things without which it could not exist,—which could have had no existence except by the apostasy,—and which, as long as they continue, are neither more nor less than the first sin perpetuated. Hence the great pro-





priety of that designation, by which Augustine, and after him the entire church of God, is accustomed to call these incidents of the first transgression,—the original sin. Now, original sin is not one thing in Adam, and another in his posterity; but it is, in him, and in them, one and the same thing. The apostasy is one, in all men. In all, its incidents are identically the same, and inseparable from it. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so to all men death passed through the one in whom all sinned.”

The conclusions, to which we are led by the whole testimony of the Scriptures on the subject, are:—that there is a principle inherent in the souls of men, which is hostile to God;—that it originated in the apostasy of our first parents from God, and is that apostasy derived from them, and abiding in their seed;—that it exerts an absolute control over the entire moral character of unrenewed men, ruling their affections, and guiding all their actions;—that hence their affections are natively and inveterately averse to God; and their actions at variance with his law;—that this principle is properly sin, and is in fact that to which the name principally applies,—as being the primary, fundamental and essential sin, which originates all actual transgressions, and imparts to them their moral enormity;—that these latter are not so properly called, sins, as,—the workings of sin,—the fruits of sin, (Rom. vii. 5, 8;) that is, of this inherent principle of depravity in the heart;—and, that this original sin,—alike as it is the apostasy of our nature, in the person of Adam, and persistent alienation, or depravity, in our own,—is our crime, is of infinite enormity, and, according to the requirements of the holy law, and the demands of divine justice, involves us under the whole burden of the infinite curse of God; whence we are by nature children of wrath.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## PROPAGATION OF ORIGINAL SIN.

It will not be necessary to go to any length in explaining the way in which original sin is propagated from our first parents to their seed. The principles upon which the result depends have been sufficiently developed already. Our first parents apostatized from God, and depraved themselves. Their posterity were “in their loins, as branches in the root,”\*—as members in the body; and, as the deed attached to all that was in them, it therefore belongs to us. “We existed, and consented and sinned, in our cause,—in the one Adam.”† The common nature of all was in him. His sin was the apostasy from God of this common nature. And, as the nature, thus apostate and depraved, flows by ordinary descent to the successive generations of men, it everywhere verifies its identity by the corruption and enmity to God, which it conveys from the first parents to all. On this subject the argument is brief and simple, and the conclusion unavoidable. That the sin of Adam was a depravation of his nature, as well as an act of sin, we have demonstrated, and can scarcely be questioned. That there was in him any other than the depravity thus originated, no one will pretend. We have seen it to be the unanimous and unambiguous testimony of the Scriptures, that the sinfulness of his seed is derived from him. If this be so, then is it one and the same, numerically, with that which was in him. But, in him its elements were two,—to wit:—apostasy, and corruption,—the entrance of depravity, and the depravity which entered. Both of these, therefore, are elements in that which flows from him to his pos-

\* Westminster Sum of Christian Doctrine, head i. § 3. Confession, ch. vi. § 3.

† Van Mastricht, Lib. iv. cap. ii. 24.





terity. The corruption, which is found in all the race of man, is either numerically one and the same, in all the members of the race, or it is diverse in them severally. But if it be diverse, then each individual has a distinct and several depravity, original in and peculiar to him; and the corruption of the children is not derived from their parents, although it be like theirs, and that of the whole race. In this case, the doctrine of original sin,—of the apostasy and depravation of the race, in Adam,—is repudiated, and the depravity is to be attributed to one of two causes,—either the creative power of God, or the personal and several apostasy of each individual. On the contrary, if the depravity be “conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation,” as our Confession asserts, then it is, and continues to be, numerically, one and the same thing in Adam, and all the generations to whom it is conveyed from him. By a just judgment of God, the sin which our first parents embraced was left in possession of the nature which had yielded to its power; and, as we receive that nature, it comes not only burdened with the guilt of its crime, but bound under the depravity which then gained dominion.

Here, it is necessary carefully to distinguish between two things which widely differ, although not unfrequently confounded with each other,—that is, the penal abandonment of the creature to the bondage of his already existing corruption, and the penal infusion of depravity into one as yet undefiled.

That, in the former sense, sin may be, and often is, the punishment of sin, is unquestionable. This it may be in two ways. (1.) The sin of one may be the punishment of the sin of another. Thus, God says to David, “Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.”—2 Sam. xii. 10. Hence the crimes and blood which thenceforward characterized the house of that man of God. So, in Isaiah we read, “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge,

to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. . . . Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of fire.”—Isa. x. 5–7, 16. (2.) Again, a person may be penally left to the unrestrained power of his own corruptions and sins, because of his love of them. Thus Paul declares, that, because men receive not the love of the truth, “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”—2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. The language of the same apostle, in another place, illustrates his meaning, here:—“If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”—2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. If we need any further illustration of the meaning of all this, we have it from James:—“Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”—James i. 13, 14. We may, then, lay down as unquestionable these several propositions:—

1. Neither is God the author or efficient cause of sin, in any case; nor does he ever exert his efficiency in arousing sin into action, where it already exists.

2. Such is the constitution of moral agents, that sin cannot occur, unless the affections and the whole moral nature yield to its embrace. Hence, the very fact of sin existing implies such a state of the case as leaves nothing upon which to predicate the idea of the sinner's unaided return. By the act of apostasy he enslaves himself to the corruptions thus engendered. Hence, the natural tendency of the wicked is to a growing intensity of enmity against God, and habitually increasing indulgence in pollution and sin.

3. So far from God causing or cherishing sin, the reverse is



always the case. This side of hell, his hand is never withdrawn, but in every instance exerts a constant restraint, of greater or less extent, upon the corruptions of men,—only permitting them to have liberty so far as serves to accomplish his own holy designs. “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”—Psalm lxxvi. 10.

4. Sin is not only evil, in that it is pursued with the curse of God, but it is evil in itself, though it had never been accursed,—the greatest evil in the universe. On the other hand, the best blessing which creature can receive, is the favourable presence, communion and smiles of his Maker, keeping him from sin, and upholding him in holiness. A modified form of the same blessing consists in that partial restraint upon the corruptions of sinners, which has just been mentioned. Hence, one element in the curse of the law, and among the most fearful, is the abandonment of the wicked by the gracious Creator;—the withdrawal of his restraining power and beneficent countenance, and surrender of the sinner to the tyranny of his own vile and malignant lusts and passions,—for love of which he has rejected the truth, rebelled against God and apostatized from holiness.

5. God does often, in just displeasure, here on earth, thus deal both with individuals and communities; for their rejection of his testimony and refusal of his love, leaving them to their own delusions and to the snares of Satan. The penal fearfulness of such a dispensation consists in three things:—the abandonment of the creature by its blessed Creator, who is the fountain of all good and blessedness; the evil of the depravity and sin, the dominion of which is thus permitted; and the consequent heavier curse which reigning sin heaps up against the day of wrath.

6. In all this, we repeat it, God neither originates, cherishes nor excites into action, depravity, which he abhors. On the contrary, the very nature of that trait of his administration which is here considered implies, as essential to it, the pre-existence of sin in the subject of such dealing,—his prior free and spontaneous apostasy from God, and choice and embrace of corruption and enmity.

These principles, duly considered, will greatly assist in attaining to clearness respecting the propagation of original sin. In creating man, his Maker so guarded him around that sin and consequent misery were impossible unless the whole nature were surrendered to the malign and accursed influence. When man apostatized, God, by a dispensation of righteous judgment, left the depravity, thus generated, to full possession of the nature. He permitted it, unrestrained, to spread, with that nature and in it, to each succeeding generation to which the nature flows by ordinary descent. Thus, the propagation of original sin, as testified by the great body of the Reformed, is consequent upon the just judgment of God; but this, not by a punitive insertion of depravity, where it was not already; but by a penal abandonment of man to the corruption which he had embraced,—a declining to purge the already defiled nature and cleanse the polluted fountain of the race. And the nature whence all spring being thus left corrupt in the father of all, the depraved result was inevitable. “For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.”

The doctrine of Edwards, on the subject of second causes, involves him in inextricable difficulties on the whole subject of <sup>§ 3. Edwards'</sup> the origin, propagation and actings of sin. If, as <sup>doctrine.</sup> he teaches, God be the immediate and only cause of all effects, then, evidently, he is the sole cause of sin, in every aspect of it. This conclusion, so fatal to his whole theory, Edwards attempts to evade by appeal to the distinction between a privative and a positive cause. He says that “to account for a sinful corruption of nature, yea, a total native depravity of the heart of man, there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality infused, implanted or wrought into the nature of man, by any positive cause or influence whatsoever, either from God or the creature; or of supposing that man is conceived and born with a fountain of evil in his heart such as is any thing properly positive. . . . The case with man was plainly this:—When God made man at first, he implanted in him two kinds of principles. There was an inferior kind, which may be called natural, being the principles of mere human nature, such as





self-love, with those natural appetites and passions which belong to the nature of man, in which his love to his own liberty, honour and pleasure were exercised. These, when alone and left to themselves, are what the Scriptures sometimes call *flesh*. Besides these, there were superior principles, that were spiritual, holy and divine, summarily comprehended in divine love: wherein consisted the spiritual image of God, and man's righteousness and true holiness; which are called in the Scriptures *the divine nature*. These principles may, in some sense, be called supernatural. . . . When man sinned, and broke God's covenant, and fell under his curse, these superior principles left his heart, for, indeed, God then left him. . . . Therefore, immediately, the superior divine principles wholly ceased: so light ceases in a room when the candle is withdrawn. And thus man was left in a state of darkness, woeful corruption and ruin; nothing but flesh, without spirit. . . . It were easy to show how every lust and depraved disposition of man's heart would naturally arise from this privative original, if here were room for it."\*

Let it be observed that the question is not, whether corruption or sin is a physical thing,—a substance, material or immaterial, inhering in the soul,—but, what is the cause of sin? The view developed, by our author, on the whole subject is entirely inadequate and erroneous. Every creature of God, so far forth as it is his creature, is perfectly good. All its attributes and functions, and all their normal exercises, are good. Adam was not endowed with one set of attributes by which he was constituted a man, and another by which he was a holy being. Take from him those faculties, in the right exercise of which he displayed the image of his spotless Maker, and, in so doing, you rob him, not so much of holiness, as of humanity. His righteousness consisted in the right tendency and exercise of his moral powers, and his apostasy and corruption was the reverse. So, too, in regard to the daily actions of men. The character is not determined by the nature or quality, but by the object, of the exercises and affections. Hatred itself, however intense, is

\* Edwards on Original Sin, Part iv. ch. 2.

not sin, unless directed to a wrong object. God and all holy beings hate sin with perfect hatred. Love, even, has in itself no virtue, except as it is rightly bestowed. The wicked are lovers; but "lovers of their own selves," "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," lovers of sin, and therefore hateful to God. Corruption and sin, then, do not proceed from a privative cause; but from the movement of the moral powers in wrong directions. Here, evidently, we must recognise a positive force which bears the moral powers of man into devious paths, and determines him to love sin and hate holiness and the Holy One. And shall we admit that the blessed God is, in any form, the author of this depravity? Shall we for one moment tolerate the suggestion that, privative or positive, he is its cause? "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed."—James i. 13, 14.

It will be said, that Edwards asserts expressly,—and truly, if the words be taken in a certain sense,—that "only God's *withdrawing*, as it was highly proper and necessary that he should, from rebel man, being, as it were, driven away by his abominable wickedness, and men's natural principles being *left to themselves*, this is sufficient to account for his becoming intirely corrupt, and bent on sinning against God." "Now, for God so far to have the disposal of this affair, as to *withhold* those influences without which *nature* will be corrupt, is not to be the author of sin." True indeed; but of what value are such statements; when we find their author protest, that by nature he means nothing but the power of God; and, by the course of nature, "the continued immediate efficiency of God"? In the very next paragraph,—with an inconsistency which we are not called upon either to explain, or excuse,—he denies that God can be released from the charge of being the author of sin, on the ground of a corrupt tendency of man's nature,—because "the course of nature is nothing without God." As we have already seen, he in terms repudiates any defence, which supposes the sinner to have any power or efficiency of his own, apart from the immediate agency



of God,—any cause to exist but God. Such is the doctrine set forth by Edwards, in an entire chapter, devoted formally to the solution of the difficulties which he recognised as surrounding this subject.—“Chap. II. (Part IV.) Concerning that objection against the doctrine of native corruption, that to suppose men receive their first existence in sin, is to make Him who is the Author of their being, the author of their depravity.”

In fact, the very language used by Edwards to state his doctrine, is a contradiction in terms. A cause is a force of some kind, by the positive action of which the contemplated effect is produced. And, therefore, to talk of a privative cause, meaning thereby the absence of a positive force, is to describe that which is no cause, and from which no manner of effect can proceed. Further, should we even admit the validity of Edwards' doctrine of a privative cause, yet upon his theory of causation, the objection of Whitby applies with overwhelming force:—“In the nature of the thing, and in the opinion of philosophers, *causa deficiens, in rebus necessariis, ad causam efficiens reducenda est*. In things necessary, the deficient cause must be reduced to the efficient.” If there be no force in the creature, except the power of God,—if nature be nothing but the established order of his agency,—it matters not what the form in which the cause of sin is stated, whether privative or positive, it is at last but a circumlocution for the name of God. He is at best supposed to have withheld from the creature powers essential to give its actions a holy character; and at the same time to have communicated to him impulses which of necessity developed the opposite result. Thus is God made the author of sin. This conclusion, which Edwards tries to evade, is, by Emmons, with more courage and consistency, recognised and vindicated, as the legitimate consequence flowing from the premises.

A popular modification of the doctrine of Edwards, with respect to the propagation of original sin, comprehends the following points:—In consequence of Adam's sin, we  
24. *Penal privation theory.* are born under a penal privation of divine influences, and consequent want of original righteousness, or tendency to the love and service of God. These, together with temporal

calamities and death, constitute the entire penalty of original sin imputed, considered in itself. The consequence, however, of this infliction is, that the soul, which is necessarily active, being thus precluded from activity in a right direction, inevitably develops tendencies toward evil; and thus, as an effect of the penal privation here described, becomes actually depraved. It is not until this result has been realized, that we are involved in the proper penalty of the law, the curse of eternal death.

In this theory, there are two or three features which demand special notice. The first is, the nature of that penal liability which is predicated upon Adam's sin imputed:—“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” We have seen, that, in the argument of the apostle, the death thus introduced is identified in the clearest manner with that death which is the wages of sin, that death which Christ came to take away,—a purpose accomplished by him “in that he died unto sin once.” It would seem, therefore, unquestionable that, by the death which entered by the sin of Adam, and to which all men are liable, as the punishment of that sin, is meant, the whole fearful burden of indignation and wrath which sin deserves, from the hand of Almighty God. According, however, to this theory, it means no positive infliction at all, except such as are temporal; but only the loss of divine influence and original righteousness. This interpretation is based upon the fact, that the word, death, is used to express any and every form of evil, which is inflicted in punishment of sin. But the attempt to sustain the position here stated, on that ground, is involved in a manifest fallacy. Sin is, in the Scriptures, never regarded as any thing less than an infinite evil. Hence, its punishment is an infinite curse. Finite evils are, indeed, recognised by the name of, death; but only as elements and pledges of those which are infinite. The word is never used, where God's curse is not implied; and that curse admits of no limitation. To say, therefore, that a given dispensation is a punishment of sin, and yet attempt to limit the burden to merely privative and temporal evils, is the grossest of contradictions. It is, to assume that the law and justice of God can find something less than infinite evil in sin; and be satisfied





for it with something short of utter wrath. It is to suppose that the vials of wrath may be opened, and their contents be poured out upon the victim; and yet limit their woe to certain features in his constitution, and forms of temporal evil. This theory is not only thus inconsistent with the doctrine of Paul, and the whole teaching of the Scriptures on the subject of sin and its punishment. It is involved in helpless inconsistency with itself. Assuming, as a fundamental position, that Adam's sin is not in us criminal, but only liable to punishment,—and denying it to involve the infinite and eternal misery, which is the penal sanction of God's law,—the attempt is made to represent it as being punished with a lighter infliction than that curse which pursues real sin. But the infliction described is really far more fearful and to be dreaded, than any amount of mere suffering. It defiles the soul, and alienates it from God.

The means by which this defiling process is carried into effect, we have stated. The first step is the withholding of divine influence. It is assumed that Adam was at first endowed with a divine influence, for his support in integrity; and that, as a punishment of his sin, this influence was withdrawn from him and us; the immediate effect of which is, our loss of original righteousness. It is certain, however, that Adam never had such an influence. Its absence is the very thing which is testified by the entire Reformed church, when it asserts our first parents to have been left to the freedom of their own will, in their original estate. They enjoyed God's beneficent care, his approving smile, and personal presence and intercourse; and "all mankind by their fall lost communion with God." But they did not lose a divine influence, upholding them in holiness. They never had it. Else they could never have fallen. It is, therefore, an evident mistake, to attribute its absence in us, to the penal effects of their sin.

The second step, in the process of penal depravation, is the loss of original righteousness. This loss of righteousness is represented as not only logically distinguishable from the corruption of nature, but separable, and actually separated, from it, in its nature, cause and origin. In punishment of Adam's first sin,

original righteousness, which consists in a tendency to the love and service of God, is taken away. The soul is, from its nature, necessarily active. The consequence of its being deprived of holy tendencies is, that its activity must find some other direction. Hence, tendencies to evil; or, actual depravity. Essential, here, is the idea that it is possible to predicate the loss of righteousness of one cause, and depravity of another. The loss of righteousness is attributed to the power of the Creator, in the infliction of a judicial sentence. The corruption or depravity is consequent upon the activity of the soul, operating under the limitations induced by the withholding of righteousness. The soul, then, may be conceived of as divested of righteousness, without being yet actually depraved. Thus we have the scholastic fancy, of original righteousness being an ornament extrinsic to the nature, as a garland is to a maiden. Not only is it conceivable, upon this theory, that the soul may be divested of righteousness, without yet being actually depraved; but it is assumed, that such is actually the case, at a certain period in the history of every individual. In the first instant of existence, he is deprived of righteousness. But the depravity is a consequence of this, taken in connection with the active nature of the soul; which, being precluded from holy tendencies, develops those which are depraved. Now, prior to the action of the soul, its activity can be no cause: so that depravity is not original in the soul; but, at the most, is generated by its first exercise.

Respecting the loss of righteousness, here represented, there are some questions, the solution of which is necessary to the clearing of the doctrine. Is the withholding of divine influences supposed to constitute, in and of itself, a privation of righteousness? Or, does it merely give opportunity for the loss of righteousness, in some other way? If the former supposition be adopted, our want of righteousness is, by definition, the sole and immediate work of God. It is impossible, in this case, that we should be, in any way, or to any extent, responsible for it, or criminal in it. If the other alternative be adopted, the difficulties are no less insurmountable. It will then result, that our





want of original righteousness does not run parallel with our being. It results, in some way, from agencies subsequent to the dawn of existence. We are, then, at first, clothed in it. It will be necessary, therefore, to show how it comes to pass that, upon the withdrawal of divine influence, man infallibly loses his original righteousness. Is it by virtue of a necessity—natural, or moral? If the former, whence does it arise; and how do we come to be criminal in it? If the latter, what is meant; if it be not that the nature is originally characterized by a tendency to sin,—a disposition to cast off righteousness? But such a tendency, is depravity, itself; and, thus, original in the soul, prior to all activity, is entirely inconsistent with the theory, which describes depravity as generated by causes, essential among which is the activity of the soul.

Waiving these difficulties, still others present themselves, respecting the nature and evil of human depravity. Given,—man's activity of moral nature; less,—divine influence, and tendency toward God:—Is this all that is meant by the native depravity of man? Such is the view which this theory presents. If this should be denied, it will be necessary to show how and when any other element is or can be introduced; and, particularly, how the moral turpitude enters into the case.

However these questions may be answered, one thing is evident:—This scheme ignores the doctrine of our sin and fall in Adam. It is not pretended to assign to our first parents any efficient causation in the matter. At the most, their relation to it is constructive, and of legal intentment. Neither are we criminals in their sin, nor depraved in their apostasy. Not only so, but the scheme precludes in us any moral responsibility, or criminality, in the depravation which it does describe. Proceeding as does that depravation from causes,—the want of righteousness, and the activity of the soul,—both of which are immediately from God, and in no wise from us, their immediate and necessary effect cannot be our crime.

In fact, the necessary result of this theory, in whatever light it is viewed, is, to induce the denial or palliation of the enormity and wickedness of native depravity. This results not only from

the logical structure of the theory as already examined, but from the principles of interpretation which it renders necessary in the exposition of Paul's argument. It is necessary, either to abandon, altogether, the idea of our sustaining any penal responsibility for Adam's sin,—to deny our original depravity to be in itself sinful and deserving God's infinite wrath and curse,—or, to admit Adam's apostasy to be truly our sin. Paul reasons from the universality of death to a universal condemnation on account of violated law. Now, if the original principle of depravity, which is in men by nature, be truly sin, contrary to the holy law, and a just and sufficient ground of condemnation and death, then evidently it would be absurd to attribute universal death to a merely constructive sin which is not a crime. Further, the sin of which the apostle speaks is continuous, from Adam's transgression, to all after time. It is described by him, not as a plurality, but a unit; not transient, but abiding; numerically one and the same which entered by Adam, and flowed through him to all. Now, to admit native corruption to be truly our sin, of itself deserving God's wrath and curse, involves several conclusions which are entirely at variance with the whole scheme here considered. It implies that it was our sin in its origin in Adam, as well as in its continuance and activity in our own persons. For it would evidently be absurd to suppose that, which in Adam was only our constructive crime, to be transmitted and become a principle of real depravity in us; and this the more, as Paul, in both cases, designates it by the one name, and attributes to it one turpitude, condemnation and death. If, then, native corruption be truly sin, deserving the full punishment of sin, it follows that we truly sinned in Adam; from whence, according to Paul, that corruption flows. All this, again, implies a real and substantial oneness of nature in the race,—such a unity in Adam as to constitute a medium for the transfusion to all of that one sin which, in its origin in his person, was the apostasy and depravation of all, and so the ground of their just condemnation.

How entirely all this is inconsistent with the penal privation theory, we need not insist. Denying any real oneness of the



race in Adam,—any transfer of the turpitude, or communion in the crime, of his sin,—denying the numerical oneness of the depravity which is in us with the sin which originated in Adam,—it is necessary to deny that our native position, as respects inherent corruption, is sufficient to justify a sentence of death against all. The admission of this would leave no place for the doctrine of Paul, that the sin of Adam is the ground of the condemnation and death which have passed upon all. In fact,—we repeat it,—the alternatives are, to assume the apostle to have reasoned incorrectly in attempting to prove the condemnation of all, in Adam, from the infliction of death upon all,—to deny native indwelling sin to deserve and involve the penalty of eternal death,—or, to recognise the sin to be one, in its entrance and continuance, in Adam and us; and its criminality one and inseparable, from either aspect of it, attaching as much to our apostasy in Adam as to our realized personal depravity. If Adam's is not our real sin, and depravity in us deserves the curse of God, it is preposterous to try to evade the conclusion that the death of all is the punishment, not of Adam's transgression, but of indwelling sin, and nothing else.

It is a fatal objection to this theory of the penal superinducing of depravity, that it has no place in the Scriptures. The reader will search in vain throughout the sacred volume for an intimation that, in any case, or under any circumstances, corruption or sin is originated where it did not before exist by a penal dispensation, or in any way other than by an apostasy which is criminal in the subject of the depravation. In particular, do we never find the corruption of the race of Adam described as a punitive infliction; or, in fact, in any way a penal thing. Always is it there spoken of as a criminal characteristic, existing in us by virtue of our inbeing and apostasy in Adam.

Further, this doctrine, if true, renders the salvation of sinners, even by the death of Christ, forever impossible. According to it, an element of the punishment of sin, as inflicted by the law and justice of God, is the depravation of the victims,—the origination of sin, by a penal process, in the children of Adam. Now, it is certain, that whatever the Son of God endured, he did not,

he could not, sin, or become depraved. He is, and ever was and will be, the Holy One. If, then, the law inflicts such a penalty as this, Christ has not satisfied the law, and its unexhausted curse still remains against every child of Adam, and must forever remain.

Inconsistent as is this theory with the plan of grace as revealed in the Scriptures, it is equally at variance with the unanimous testimony of the Reformed confessions. It is the harmonious doctrine of the Reformed churches, that Adam was the root of the human family, in whom, as parts of him, as branches, or members, all his posterity were so identified that his sin was, not only his own crime, but theirs also. "They *sinned* in him." And, as several and personal existence is derived by them, as individuals, out of the common nature which sinned, they, according to those confessions, receive, by their natural generation, both the guiltiness of this sin, its turpitude, and the depravity which it generated. The doctrine of these standards on this subject has been sufficiently illustrated in our introductory chapter.\*

The theory which we have here examined involves a deficient estimate of the diverse points of light from which sin is to be viewed. The inception, and the continuance, of apostasy, or sin, although logically distinguishable, are yet but aspects of one and the same thing,—so absolutely inseparable, that it is impossible either should exist, or be conceived to exist, without the other. Again, viewed as a real principle existent in the soul, and as an active influence operating in the life, sin still is but the same thing, seen in different lights. Originated by the apostasy of Adam, and continuous in him and his seed,—quiescent, though too truly existent, in infants, and active in adults, in the generation of actual transgressions,—its identity is unbroken, as it flows from Adam to the latest of his sons. Its criminality is one and infinite, and its penalty one,—the infinite wrath and curse of God. In the argument of Paul to the Romans, it is presented in all these lights, in turn. In the twelfth verse of the fifth chapter we have its origin,—not that of Adam's personal apostasy, but of whatever in us may be so designated. Not only Adam, but "all sinned," and apostasy





tized from God,—not in act only, but in the attitude of the nature, in the inmost powers of the soul. In the thirteenth and fourteenth verses it is exhibited as existent in the generations who flowed from Adam, the apostate head,—innate but latent in infants, and active and revealed as sin in adults, and in all condemned by justice and accursed by God. In the twentieth and twenty-first verses, and throughout the sixth and seventh chapters, it is viewed as an active principle, working transgression. In all, it is one enormous sin,—“the sin of the world,”—deserving, and, but for the redeeming grace of Christ, receiving, the infinite curse of God. This curse is just as fully incurred, and, but for grace, as infallibly inflicted, where sin has never grown to active transgression, as, where the vine of Sodom has fully proved its identity by the abundant clusters of Gomorrah which weigh down its branches.

How strangely contrasted with this is the theory before us! Its first feature is a sin, which is no crime, but a mere condition of being regarded and treated as sinners,—a regarding which does not mean that they are in fact looked upon and regarded by God as real sinners, and a treatment which does not consist in visiting them with the proper penalty of real sin; but something altogether different. Its second characteristic is a guilt which is devoid of sinfulness,—which does not imply moral demerit or turpitude. Then follows a punishment, which consists not in the penalty of the law, nor necessarily in the active infliction of any thing, but merely the withholding of an influence for man's retention in uprightness,—an influence which Adam never enjoyed, when in the highest favour with God,—the withholding of which leaves man no alternative; but, if active at all,—and such he must be, for such God has made him,—he must be active in sin! Only when sin has thus been wrought, does this theory recognise a turpitude, which is real crime, in such sense as to deserve the full meed of God's wrath and curse.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE ETERNAL COVENANT.

Bound every heart; and every bosom, burn!  
O what a scale of miracles is here!  
Its lowest round high planted on the skies,  
Its towering summit lost beyond the thought  
Of man or angel.—YOUNG.

THUS have we traced the dark features of man's wicked apostasy from holiness and God. In his creation, crowned with a glory, honour and dignity which constituted him a becoming image of the Creator, in presence of God's universe; enthroned in dominion over earth and every living thing; endowed with every requisite to the highest and perfect happiness here, and with the promise of infinite blessedness, in eternal life, on condition of obedience; he yet contemned the present favours of a beneficent God, and rejected his covenant of peace. He turned his back upon that throne of radiant light whence shone upon him unmixed goodness and love; before which the seraphim of glory, in veiled prostration, rejoice to adore. He plucked the forbidden fruit, violated the seal of God's loving and rightful sovereignty, and set his hand to the covenant of Jehovah's curse. His nature and his race he thus plunged in a guilt and ruin, alike fearful in extent and enormity of moral evil and crime and dark in the shadows of a hopeless misery and despair. Death entered the world, and passed to all men. The curse swooped down to claim and seize its rightful victims. The law and justice of God concurred to denounce an infinite woe against the impious, whose puny arms had lifted up defiance against the power of God, and whose hearts returned contempt and hate to his goodness and holiness. Confident in the success of his malignant arts against our race, Satan exulted in the imagined

§ 1. The curse  
on man is  
stayed.



disappointment of God's designs of love to man. Secure of its victims, hell from beneath was moved to meet them at their coming; and the fallen angels, for whom it was ordained, expected new companions in the woe of their undying anguish and deepening despair. All heaven stood in silent awe and expectation. The adoring throng of blessed spirits looked to see an indignation and vengeance revealed which should be adequate satisfaction for such sin.

Yet no clouds of darkness gathered about the throne. No wrathful thunders uttered their curses, nor lightnings of vengeance flamed against the guilty. But the light of God's infinite compassion and eternal love illumed the world, and salvation from sin and the curse was provided for man by the wisdom and goodness of his insulted God. The hour of man's utmost need, when trembling he fled from the presence of his Maker, was the chosen time of God's revelation of grace. He, who expected nothing but wrath, is greeted with assurances of love, and hears the promise of redemption from ruin, and restoration to a higher dignity and richer privilege and favour than that so wickedly lost. The penal requirements of the law shall be obeyed. Justice shall be fully enforced. The curse shall be satisfied. God's holiness, which abhors sin, and his righteousness, which punishes it, shall be maintained. Every attribute of God's nature shall be revealed in untarnished radiance and infinite growing glory. But lost and hell-deserving man shall be saved. God shall be just, and the justifier of the ungodly. Mercy and truth shall meet together; righteousness and peace shall kiss each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. The woman's seed shall bruise the head of the serpent, and the Son of man thwart all the wiles of Satan. A Captain of salvation shall arise, whose conquering arms shall recover our revolted world to the allegiance of God; and cause the schemes of the enemy to recoil upon his own head, in a storm of devouring indignation. By the arm of the second Adam shall the destroyer of the first be overthrown in utter discomfiture and eternal shame. He who made man as the crown of the crea-

tion and image of himself, is not taken by surprise, nor disappointed in his purposes of kindness to our race, by the successful treachery of Satan. On the contrary, man's ruin is the very occasion awaited by Omniscience, for unfolding to his creatures the mystery of his boundless wisdom, and the riches of his grace.

"The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—God  
Devised the wondrous plan;—devised, achieved;  
And, in achieving, made the marvel more.

—God was made flesh,  
And dwelt with man on earth! The Son of God,  
Only-begotten, and well beloved, between  
Men and his Father's justice interposed;  
Put human nature on: His wrath sustained;  
And in their name suffered, obeyed and died,  
Making his soul an offering for sin;  
Just for unjust, and innocence for guilt."—POLLOCK.

All of which we have heretofore spoken,—the creation of man in the image of God,—his endowment with glory, dominion and blessedness,—the law which was laid upon him, and the covenant which was given him, the permission of the temptation and of the fall and ruin of the race,—all were but so many steps toward the accomplishment of a scheme of infinite wisdom and love, borne forward by the energies of infinite power, for the revelation of the glorious attributes of the Author. But this wonderful scheme was not merely a plan devised by the divine wisdom, and accomplished by the divine will and power. Its elements were the provisions of an eternal covenant, which was ineffably made, between the persons of the Godhead. Of that covenant, the Father was the author. The parties to the contract were the Father and the Son; and the Spirit was witness. Its seal was the tremendous oath of Jehovah; its date, God's own eternity, before the foundation of the world; and its terms comprehended the whole order of providence concerning all the creatures. All of these were made by and for Him who is, by the covenant, enthroned Head over all. But the especial object of the whole transaction was the provision of salvation for fallen man; and, by this means, the revelation, to all crea-





tures, of the riches of God's infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, and glorious grace.

The first announcement of this covenant was addressed to the serpent, but in the hearing and for the comfort of the apostate and convicted parents of our race. "The Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."—Gen. iii. 14, 15. Thus, the curse glanced upon the serpent, the instrument of the seduction, and fell with gathering fearfulness upon the head of Satan, its author. To arrest his impious and malignant exultation, he is assured that not only is he henceforth doubly accursed, but his plots against man and God will all be turned to utter contempt;—that the Seed of the very woman, over whom he imagined so easy a triumph, shall amply avenge her wrong, and, if with bruised heel, yet with triumphant might, crush the head of her enemy, and redeem her from the ruin which he had devised.

If the announcement of the coming Seed was confusion to the seducer, it was the dayspring from on high to the fallen pair. It assured them not simply of respite from the curse, but of triumph over it. It proclaimed life to the dead; and, in token of the faith which laid hold of the precious promise, Adam called his wife EVE,—that is, LIFE,—“because she was the mother of all living,”—Gen. iii. 20; as being the mother, both, of that promised Son, to whom it was given to have life in himself, who hath abolished death; and also, of those to whom he shall give eternal life. In confirmation of this faith, and pledge of its acceptance, Adam was taught to offer sacrifices of blood; and, as the sacrificial animals expired, and the smoke of their burning rose from off the altar, and God's own hand clothed the repentant worshippers with the skins of the sacrifices, they, in a figure, saw the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,—a vicarious atonement for their sins, and his righteousness an

abundant covering for their nakedness. We have in another place alluded to the language of Eve upon occasion of the birth of Cain,—language which seems plainly to have reference to that “second man, the Lord from heaven,” by whom the serpent was to be destroyed:—“I have gotten the man, JEHOVAH.”—Gen. iv. 1. The fact that Cain was not the Messiah, is not in the least inconsistent with the supposition that such was the imagination of Eve; and the care used by the Spirit of God to recover and put upon record, by the hand of Moses, this expression of Eve, in the brief narrative which sketches the history of seventeen hundred years in two short chapters, seems entirely inconsistent with the idea that it meant no more than to recognise the fact that “children are an heritage of the Lord.”

As the plan of God, so the revelation of it is carried on in a process of gradual development. The promise made in the garden, and the light shed upon it by the sacrificial symbol, constituted the sum of the gospel, as preached by Enoch and Noah, and believed by the people of God, during the twenty centuries which intervened from the fall to the calling of Abraham. To him God had said, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”—Gen. xii. 1–3. Afterward, the promises thus made were confirmed to the patriarch in a solemn covenant, sealed by a new name and the rite of circumcision:—“When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, (father of a multitude,) for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceed-





ing fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised."—Gen. xvii. 1–10.

Thus was the gospel preached to Abraham by God himself; and the promise upon which faith had previously rested was confirmed and established by a solemn covenant, ratified and sealed. Nor did the condescending kindness and love of God pause here. Having made experiment of the faith of Abraham, by the requirement that he should sacrifice his son, and having enabled the patriarch to come forth from the fiery trial unscathed, God adds his oath to establish the abundant grace of the covenant:—"And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice."—Gen. xxii. 15–18.

Thus, "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—Heb. vi. 17, 18. How fully Abraham was informed, as to the whole extent and significance of this transaction, we have no means of knowing. Our Saviour assures the Jews, "Your father Abra-

ham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."—John viii. 56. In fact, the covenant with Abraham was a literal transcript from that between the Father and Son; and it is only by viewing it in this light, that we can form any just conceptions respecting it. Of this fact the evidence is conclusive. Thus, Paul declares that, "to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. . . . Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made."—Gal. iii. 16, 19. Thus is it evident that the Abrahamic covenant was entered into with the Seed, Christ, rather than with Abraham himself. To the Seed the promise was made.

The next signal step in the revelation of the covenant, is recorded in the seventh chapter of 2 Samuel, and the seventeenth of 1 Chronicles. David, having finished his wars, and being at rest from all enemies, proposed to build a temple to God. Upon this occasion, the prophet Nathan was sent, to forbid the enterprise,—to tell him that he did well that it was in his heart, (1 Kings viii. 18;) yet not he, but his son, should build it. "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."—2 Sam. vii. 12–16. That this promise had an immediate respect to Solomon, and the temple builded at Jerusalem by him, is no doubt true. But, that "a greater than Solomon is here," is certain. And, that David so understood the matter, is equally clear. Upon receiving the communication, he went in and sat before the Lord, "and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?"—2 Sam. vii. 18, 19. Dr. Kenni-



cott remarks of this address, that it is "just such as one might naturally expect, from a person overwhelmed with the greatness of the promised blessing. It is abrupt, full of wonder, and fraught with repetitions." The words rendered, "And is this the manner of man, O Lord God," are not, according to the same learned author, sufficiently, or even accurately, translated. Their meaning, as he expresses it, is: "And this is (or, must be) the manner of THE MAN (or, of THE ADAM)." Bishop Horsley adopts the leading idea of Dr. Kennicott, but departs a little from his translation. He renders the passage thus:—"And this is the arrangement about THE MAN, O Lord Jehovah!" The words, he says, are exactly parallel with 1 Chron. xvii. 17, which he translates thus:—"And thou hast regarded me in the arrangement about THE MAN that is to be from above, O Lord Jehovah." Sebastian Schmidt translates the words in the latter place, "et respexisti me juxta rationem hominis illius celsissimi." This, however, seems not to give accurately the sense of הַמְּעִלָּה which, as stated by Dr. Kennicott, signifies, subsequence, as to time, and, from above, as to place.\* Both of these ideas are combined by Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 47:—"The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." Similar is the idea of John the Baptist:—"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all."—John iii. 31. Luther translates 2 Sam. vii. 19,—"And this is the way of a man who is God the Lord." That "THE ADAM," of whom David in these places speaks, is the Lord Jesus Christ, is manifest; and that upon this occasion the Spirit of inspiration imparted to David a knowledge of the manner of the second Adam, of the covenant by which he was ordained to take the place of the first, and of the glory and dominion with which he was to be crowned, is evident, from the tenor of the Messianic Psalms, in which the theme is celebrated.† In fact, the testimony of Peter, on the day of Pentecost, is, of itself, conclusive on this point. Citing the language of David in the sixteenth Psalm,—

\* See Theological and Literary Journal, 1858, p. 209.

† Consult Psalms ii, viii, xvi, xxi, xxii, xl, xlv, lxix, lxxii, lxxxix, cx.

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption,"—he tells the multitude, that this cannot be meant of David himself; since "he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."—Acts ii. 27–31.

From the time of this promise to David, the doctrine of the eternal covenant has ever constituted a fundamental article in the faith of the church; and the salvation, kingdom and glory therein secured, has been the great end of all her labours, and consummation of her hopes. It is the key-note to the loftiest strains which are found in the book of the Psalms; and the theme in respect to which the prophets "inquired and searched diligently, . . . searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—1 Peter i. 10, 11. Whatever shadows, however, rested on their minds, and whatever mysteries remained hidden from their understandings, the whole subject now stands revealed to us, in the clearer light of fulfilment, and of the inspired interpretations which the New Testament furnishes to the revelations of the Old. We are thus permitted to contemplate a scene, in beholding which, we are called to put off our shoes, in adoring reverence and awe. The place where we stand is holy. It is the presence-chamber of God, the council-room of the blessed Three. Satan has rebelled against the sovereignty, and defied the power, of the omnipotent One. Especially has his impious treason arrayed itself against that eternal Son, by whom are all things, and for whom are all things, who is the Mediator, by whom alone has God ever revealed himself to creature. Man, in mad impiety, has joined in the treason. The nations rage, and the peoples imagine a vain thing. The kings take their stand, and the princes consult together, against Jehovah and his Anointed. "Let us break their bands





in sunder," say they, "and cast away their cords from us." Proud boast, but imbecile! He that sitteth in the heavens laughs. The Lord has them in derision. Whilst his enemies are conspiring, the decree goes forth, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion."—Psalm ii. 6. "And to the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. i. 8, 9. "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."—Psalm cx. 1-4. The response of the Son is given in the fortieth Psalm:—"Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."—Psalm xl. 7, 8.

From the exposition given in the epistle to the Hebrews, we learn that the oath, by which Christ was ordained a priest after the order of Melchizedek, comprehends in its terms the whole sum of the covenant of grace. We will take it, therefore, as our centre of observation in tracing some of the particulars of that transaction. Of the importance of the doctrine of the covenant here announced, it is scarcely possible to speak in terms of exaggeration. In the fact of the formation of such a compact,—in the parties between whom it was made, the provisions therein contained, the oath by which it is confirmed, and the Witness by whom attested,—in the revelation of it to man, and in its execution, as a scheme of grace to man and glory to God,—the Persons of the Godhead are revealed, in the unity of their essence, the severalty of their subsistence, the peculiarity of their several mode of agency, and the relations subsisting between them, with an evidence and clearness no otherwise attainable. On this subject, the following are some of the most important points,

which will be illustrated in the unfolding and fulfilment of the covenant.

1. As the fact of the forming of such a covenant attests the existence of distinct and peculiar relations between a plurality of subsistences in the divine nature, so, the announcement of such a covenant is designed to call our attention to those relations.

2. The relations thus made known to us are of two kinds,—natural and moral. Of the natural relations, consisting in the subsistence of the three Persons in one God, and the mode of that subsistence, as expressed in terms of generation and spiration, we have already spoken particularly.

3. The moral relations of the Persons of the Godhead to each other are held up, in the covenant, in a very signal light. In it, the eternal Father is revealed in the act of binding himself to his co-equal Son by a solemn oath, by which he appeals to his own infinite holiness in assurance of his truth:—"Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David." In it, the Son pledges his righteousness to the fulfilment of terms upon which the destinies of heaven, earth and hell are suspended. In it, the Spirit stands co-party and witness, "because the Spirit is truth." In it, each Person is revealed concurring, in infinite harmony, mutual confidence and love, to the completion of a scheme of matchless wisdom and goodness, for the display of their essential and unsearchable perfections; which, toward man, assume the guise of grace, mercy and peace, righteousness and truth.

4. The attributes, for the revelation of which such provision is made, are those which, as we have formerly seen, constitute the standard of moral excellence in the creatures. Conformity with them is the principle of all moral obligation and duty, to angels and men. As such, they are made known through the covenant; and, as such, set forth in the law; a fact which, in a very emphatic manner, proclaims them to us as the subject of God's infinite complacency, and matter of his highest glory. Thus are they commended to us as the theme of our most assiduous study and exalted praise.

The Author of this scheme is God the Father. "The Lord hath sworn." So, in the second Psalm, v. 7:—"Thou art my



Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me." This corresponds with all the testimonies of the Scriptures on the subject. So it is in all the Messianic Psalms. So it is everywhere testified in the New Testament. Jesus tells Nicodemus that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. Again, in John vi. 38 he says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;" and, when he had accomplished his mission, he says to the Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. John writes, "We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."—1 John iv. 14. We might multiply testimonies to this point, were it necessary. That it is of importance, Paul assures us. Speaking of Christ's priesthood, he says, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So, also, Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."—Heb. v. 4-6. Thus, the work of Christ, in all its parts and relations, originated with the Father. It constitutes a manifestation of the boundless love and compassion, the condescending grace, the infinite wisdom, and the holiness, justice and truth, of the Father. He that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father.

It is to the Son, as divine, as the second Person of the Trinity, that the oath is addressed. Thus, Paul tells the Hebrews, "To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."—Heb. i. 8. This quotation by Paul from the forty-fifth Psalm, doubly proves our point;—as Paul testifies that it is to the Son, as such, that the address is made; and, as the express language of God himself in the Psalm declares, that he who is addressed, and to whom the throne of David is given, and the covenant of David established, is God:—"I speak of the things which I have made touching the King. . . Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

So the oath contained in our text is addressed by one divine Person to another:—"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." In fact, the very nature of the case renders it impossible that it should have been otherwise than as God that the Son was addressed and became a party to the covenant; since it was by virtue of its provisions that he became man. But for it he would never have clothed his majesty in our flesh.

The terms of the covenant consisted of two parts. These were,—a work to be done by the Son of God; and,—a reward to be enjoyed, in compensation for that work. Both of these are specified by our Saviour, in his prayer to the Father, in John xvii. 1, 4, 5:—"Father, the hour is come: glorify thy Son; that thy Son also may glorify thee. . . I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

The word of the oath, in the Psalm, briefly, but fully, sets forth all the terms of the covenant. "This Melchizedek," says Paul, "king of Salem, priest of the most high God; . . first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."—Heb. vii. 1-3. The provisions were these:—That, as Priest, Christ should take to himself a body and soul, of the nature of man; honour, by a perfect obedience, that holy law, which the first Adam dishonoured by transgression; fulfil the terms of that covenant of life, which Adam broke; and offer himself a sacrifice on the altar of God's justice; enduring, in the place of his people, the curse, which they had incurred;—that, as King of Righteousness, he should pursue with his avenging sword, and utterly subdue and destroy, Satan and his followers,—all his and the Father's enemies;—and that, as King of Peace, he should subdue to himself the hearts of a chosen people; rescue them from the power of Satan and sin; and of them, as goodly stones, build a spiritual house, to stand forever,—a temple to the glory of the Father, in the presence of all creatures.





The conditions, which were pledged to the Son by the Father, had respect to his own person, to his people and to his enemies. To his person was promised, the formation of a sinless humanity, to serve as a fitting temple for the incarnation of his Godhead, and the shedding abroad of its glories,—the bestowal upon his mediatorial person, of the indwelling fullness of the personal presence of the Holy Spirit, to be possessed by him as his Spirit, and employed by him in the fulfilment of the purposes of the covenant; and,—the gift to him, as Mediator, of honour, glory and dominion over all creatures in heaven and earth. It was provided, that, in honour of his condescension, in stooping to assume the nature of man, the manhood thus assumed should occupy the throne of heaven; and, in the presence of all the intelligences of the universe, possess eternal blessedness, dominion and glory,—and that to him as thus enthroned, God-man, Mediator, every knee should bow and every tongue should swear. The conditions respecting the people of Christ embraced their acceptance and justification, as righteous in him,—their recognition, adoption and investiture, as in him sons of God,—the bestowal upon them of eternal life,—and the enjoyment by them of a joint inheritance with Christ, in his kingdom, glory and blessedness forever. As respects his enemies, the covenant secured the Son complete triumph over them, and glory in them, in their destruction.

As the great end of this entire scheme was the display of the divine glory; and the salvation of the elect of God was the great instrumentality, designed to that end; so, provision was made therein for the performance, by each Person of the Godhead, of parts severally appropriate, and suited to the revelation of the relations subsisting between the several Persons of the blessed Trinity. Briefly, on this point,—the functions assigned to the Father in the covenant of redemption, were the justification, in Christ, of his people,—their adoption, as, in him, sons of God,—and their final investiture with the heavenly inheritance. The functions of the Son were, atonement for them to justice,—mediation between them and God,—and the exercise over them of a sovereignty, in which his sceptre alike subdues them to

himself, and protects them for himself. To the Holy Spirit, were assigned the offices of regenerating the redeemed,—of sanctifying them,—of raising them up at the last day, body and soul alike perfected in holiness and fitted for heaven,—and of implanting and sustaining in them eternal life.

In the origination of this marvellous plan of wisdom and grace, the precedence belongs to God the Father. It was he, as we have seen, who “so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.” In its execution, it is the Son, to whom the first place is assigned; and, upon the assumed certainty of his infallible faithfulness to his part, were suspended, not only all the provisions of the covenant, but all the blessings which under it were enjoyed by the saints who lived before the coming of the First Begotten into the world. In the application of the grace and salvation, thus devised by the Father, and provided by the Son, God the Spirit assumes the precedence. Before either atoning blood can avail, or adopting love be exercised, the transforming work of the Holy Spirit must be realized by the elect. Whilst the functions of each Person are thus distinctly defined, it is also equally clear that in none of them is there any thing short of the unanimous presence, concurrence and co-operation of the blessed Three. In the formation of the eternal plan, the Son, the Wisdom of God, was present, participating in it all, as well as entering into a specific covenant relation to it;—and so, also, was the Holy Spirit. In the whole atoning work of the Son, the Spirit was possessed by him without measure; and the Father did not leave him alone. (John viii. 29.) And the Spirit, in performing his work, is not only sent by the Father and Son, but is the witness to the soul of their presence and grace, and the medium of their communings with it.

The conditions of the covenant were freely accepted by the Son. “For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame.”—Heb. xii. 2. When the proposal was made, his cheerful reply was, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.”—Heb. x. 9. “When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.”—Ps. lxxv. 2. And when he had come to earth, and was engaged in fulfilling the purposes of the cove-





nant, he says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."—John x. 17, 18. When the foreshadowings of the storm of indignation for sin came upon him, he exclaims, "Now is my soul troubled; and (τι εἶπω; Πάτερ, σώσον με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης; ἀλλὰ x. τ. λ.)\* what shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name."—John xii. 27, 28. And when betrayed, he rebukes the use of the sword, by the impetuous Peter, with the inquiry, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"—Matt. xxvi. 53, 54. He loved us, and freely gave himself for us.

Whilst, in the transaction here considered, the Father and Son were the official contracting Parties, the Holy Spirit sustained a relation to it equally intimate with theirs. He was the Witness of the covenant, and concurred in all its provisions and terms, involving, as they did, his active agency in every stage of their execution; and designed, as they were, for unfolding the glory of all the Persons in the unity of the Triune God. Hence, he is joined with the Father in sending the Son on his mission of grace, in pursuance of the covenant. Says the Messiah, "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me."—Isa. xlviii. 16. In fulfilment of this, his witnessing office, the Holy Ghost testified beforehand, to the prophets, of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. To the same end, at his baptism, the Spirit descended as a dove and abode upon Jesus; thus bearing witness to him as the incarnate Son of God. Says John the Baptist, "I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy

Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."—John i. 32-34. Throughout the whole course of his ministry, Christ was accompanied by the Holy Spirit, in fulfilment of this witnessing office. By the Spirit he wrought his miracles, as himself declares to the Pharisees:—"If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."—Matt. xii. 28. And to those works he appeals, as the evidence of his mission from God:—"I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me."—John v. 36. So, too, when he had finished the work thus given him, he "was (ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι) justified by the Spirit; received up to glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. He was justified by being attested, as having fulfilled all the terms of the covenant, and as thus entitled to reception into heaven, and enthronement in the dominion and kingdom which were promised. In testimony of this, Christ was, by the Spirit, raised from the dead and received up to glory. (Rom. viii. 11.) Nor are we to imagine that, in all this, the office performed by the Spirit was one of a merely external nature, attesting to others the fact that this was the Son of God. But, to the man Christ Jesus himself was he the Witness of the covenant; attesting his call to the royal priesthood; revealing to him the terms and conditions of the covenant, in all their extent and details; the humiliation, abasement, suffering and shame, and the exaltation and glory; and, when the work of abasement and sacrifice was finished, attesting it complete, and assuring him of the perfected title to the highest throne and the Father's glory. Hence that testimony of John the Baptist:—"He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."—John iii. 34, 35. To the same effect is the testimony of Christ himself, when, in the synagogue, he read, from Isaiah,—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty

\* Griesbachii Nov. Test. Græc., in loco.



them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord,"—and told the people, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."—Luke iv. 18–21. This office of the Spirit as Witness, attesting to the Son the promises of the covenant, is spoken of in the forty-fifth Psalm, quoted by Paul to the Hebrews:—"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. i. 9.

The witnessing office of the Holy Spirit is particularly emphasized by the apostle John, both in his gospel and first epistle. Thus, speaking of that victorious faith which overcometh the world, he founds it on that very covenant of which we here speak;—he refers it to "the record that God gave us of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Of that record, "it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 6, 7, 11. Thus, whilst recognising the testimony of both the Father and Son, the apostle distinguishes that of the Holy Spirit as peculiar and official:—"It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." Nor is it any less the fulfilment of his office of Witness, as between the Father and Son, because the testimony here spoken of is addressed to the elect. Being, by the engrafting of the Spirit, united to Christ, and made members of his body, his people are identified with him in the covenant. In him, and with him, they are parties to it, entitled to possess its promises, and secured in the possession by the word of the oath. Hence, by the Witness, its whole riches are attested to them, as parties.

It is on account of this identity of his people with him, and community of interest in the blessings which are his by covenant right, that Jesus tells his disciples, "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."—John xv. 15. "All things,"—to wit, the provisions of the covenant, including his own enthronement and honour, and theirs with him. As he says, in another place, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as

my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke xxii. 29, 30. Equally clear and conclusive, on the present point, is another statement of Christ:—"When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you."—John xvi. 13–15. Of this mission of the Spirit, Christ had stated, in previous parts of his discourse, that he would be sent by the Father, in the name of the Son, (xiv. 26;) that Christ himself would send him from the Father, (xv. 26;) and that his coming was dependent on Christ's ascension:—"If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you."—John xvi. 7. It thus appears that the work of the Spirit, to which he has reference, was of such a nature as to imply the completion, by the Son, of his covenanted work,—his entrance and approval before the Father, and his consequent investiture with the dominion of all things, including the right, by express endowment from the Father, of sending the Spirit, to testify of his finished work, his eternal priesthood and universal throne. Then, in the language quoted above, he declares that the Spirit, thus sent, will impart all truth; and that, as to the nature of his revelations, they are of things of which he is not the author, but the auditor and witness; things, therefore, which have their origin with the other Persons, and which include the future glory of which Christ and his people are heirs:—"He will show you things to come." He then more specifically states, that the things of which this testimony will be given comprehend the entire riches of the glory of the Father; all of which has become the possession of the Son, and, as his, will be revealed to his people:—"All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." How intimately all this relates to the eternal covenant, and how clearly it recognises the office of





the Spirit as its Witness, we need not insist. In respect to the fulfilment of these promises of the ascending Son of God, Paul says that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

We may not dwell longer on this interesting topic. We have seen enough to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is the official Witness to the covenant, and that he fulfils this office by the anointing and mission of the Son to perform its conditions; by attesting the covenant to Jesus, as its Mediator, and bearing witness to his faithfulness in fulfilling its terms, and consequent title to its promises; and by testifying of the same things to the chosen people of Christ, the members of his body, and partakers with him in the promises. We may add, that his office is further fulfilled in testifying of these things to the enemies of Christ, to their confusion and condemnation.

We have assumed, without question, the covenant character of the transaction here considered. That such was its true nature, does not admit of reasonable question. It has every characteristic of a formal covenant; to wit, parties, mutual conditions and a seal. It is, in the Scriptures, constantly called, a covenant; and its conditional character is there presented, everywhere, in conspicuous light. The language in which Jehovah introduces the oath, is clear and sufficient, in respect to the rewards and honours which were promised to the incarnate Priest:—"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The words of the oath, itself, ordaining him a royal priest, indicate, not only enthronement and dignity, but the performance of a sacrificial work, which comprehended the whole history of his humiliation. "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer."—

Heb. viii. 3. The Messianic Psalms are very clear, as to the nature of the transaction which they celebrate,—as being one of conditional terms. The fifty-third of Isaiah, sets forth in unambiguous language the humiliation and death to which the Son was to be subjected; and the rewards of salvation to his people, and exaltation to himself, which were secured to him in return; and which are there expressly described as conditional:—"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 12. Our Saviour distinctly alludes to the provisions of the covenant, when, in his mediatorial prayer, he says, "Father, the hour is come. . . I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John xvii. 1, 4, 5. Here is a predetermined time indicated,—the time of the conflict of the Son of God with the powers of darkness; as he says to the betrayer, "This is your hour and the power of darkness."—Luke xxii. 53. Here is a work mentioned, which he came to perform,—a work given him by the Father to do. Two elements in its design and end are mentioned; namely, salvation to his people,—“As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him;”—and glory to the Father's name,—“I have glorified thee: I have finished the work.” And, on the ground of the fulfilment of the conditions, he claims the reward:—"I have finished the work; and now, O Father, glorify thou me." "Glorify me, the mediatorial person, God-man, with the glory which I, the Son, had with thee before the world was." So, Paul tells the Hebrews, that the self-abasement of the Son of God was assumed, as a condition and pledge of subsequent reward:—"Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Heb. xii. 2. In short, the whole discussion of Paul, in respect to the priesthood of Christ, in the epistle to the Hebrews, involves it as a funda-



mental fact, that the oath of Jehovah, by which the Son was ordained a royal and eternal priest, was the solemn ratification of a formal conditional covenant between those blessed and adorable Persons. Thus, in one word, comparing Christ's priesthood with that of Aaron, he says, that, "Inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest; (for those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath, by him that said unto him, The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek;) by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant."—Heb. vii. 20-22. Here, not only is the transaction designated as, (*διαθήκη*), a covenant, but the office which is assigned to Christ involves the same thing. A surety, is one who enters into engagement for the fulfilment of the conditions of a contract or covenant. The case is still further demonstrated, by the comparison made of the "better covenant," with that which was made with Israel at Sinai. That the latter was a proper covenant, is beyond question; and, that the oath made with Christ was of the same nature, the apostle assures us.

Another point of interest, in respect to the transaction here considered, is its date. Its history is parallel with the eternity of God. This is implied in the fact that the *eternity* covenant was made between the Persons of the God-head. Since it began and terminated among those adorable Persons, it is therefore independent of any limitations of time; and belongs to the annals of eternity. The conclusion thus attained, is further demonstrated by the fact, that every element in the covenant is, in the Scriptures, distinctly referred to a date before the beginning of time. Thus it is of Christ's priestly office. Says Peter, "Ye are redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times."—1 Peter i. 19, 20. Nothing can be more evident, than, that the atoning work of Christ must have been a voluntary work, and not imposed without his consent; and we have sufficiently shown that such was in fact the case. The compact, by which he agreed to undertake that work,

must then be at least as old as the decree by which he was ordained to the office of atonement. That decree is here by the apostle located before the foundation of the world. That, therefore, is the date of the covenant, by which he became a priest. The same principle applies to the terms in which John speaks of the redeemed, as those "whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world."—Rev. xiii. 8. See also xvii. 8. From these places we learn the date of the oath by which Christ was ordained a priest after the order of Melchizedek. The priestly office of Christ must be admitted to take precedence of his sacrificial work, as the slain Lamb; since it is in the exercise of his priesthood, that he provides and offers himself a sacrifice. Further, both of these must have been coincident with the entry in the book of life of the Lamb, of the names of those for whom his blood was given. But the devotion of the Lamb to sacrifice, and the inscription of the names in the book, are both defined as occurring from the foundation of the world; or, as the same date is above expressed by Peter, "before the foundation of the world." The same, therefore, must be the date of the word of the oath by which he was consecrated a priest. With this, too, agrees the parallel, drawn by Paul, between Melchizedek and Christ:—"Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life."—Heb. vii. 3.

That the covenant originated in the councils of eternity, we are expressly assured by Paul. He speaks of the "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Tit. i. 2. This promise could not have been given to any creature. It was made before creature had being. To whom it was given, Paul, in another place, tells us:—"God hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us, in Christ Jesus, before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. Again, to the Ephesians, he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. . . . Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to





his good pleasure which he hath purposed in him; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth."—Eph. i. 3, 4, 9, 10. In Paul's discussion, here, the whole scheme of grace is represented as, in its sum and fulness, originating in eternity. The saints are represented as then chosen "in Christ." The mystery of God's will, respecting the dispensation of the fulness of time, was purposed, (*ἐν αἰῶνι*), "in him,"—not, "in himself," as our translation has it. That mystery was the eternal purpose "to gather together in one all things in Christ." Comprehended in that general plan, is declared to be, the inheritance to which the saints are called, (v. 10, 11;) and the official attestation of that inheritance is attributed to the Holy Spirit, bearing witness of it to them, as one with Christ; the Son and heir:—"In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—verses 13, 14.

When we add, that the kingdom to which Christ's followers are heirs was bestowed upon them from eternity, the evidence on the present point would seem to be complete. That kingdom becomes theirs, by virtue of investiture from Christ himself, in the exercise of his own royalty, which is acquired by the covenant. Hence, Jesus says to the church in Laodiceæ, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. iii. 21. See also Matt. xix. 28, and Luke xxii. 29. But, the kingdom thus bestowed, Christ himself declares to have been prepared for them from everlasting:—"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34. From all this, it is unquestionable, that the oath of the covenant, as recited in the Psalm, was addressed by the First Person of the Godhead to the Second, in the seclusion of their own eternity. This position is further confirmed by the fact, to be noticed presently, that Christ was enthroned as covenant king, from everlasting.

We shall, at present, particularly insist upon but one of the

provisions of the covenant. The others are considered in the following chapters. As respects the salvation of men, the transaction was one of special and distinguishing grace, for an elect or chosen multitude, who are as the sand of the sea, and as the stars of heaven innumerable; but who were individually known and numbered in the covenant; and whose salvation was therein rendered infallibly secure, as a reward to the Son for his incarnation and death. The truth of this is necessarily involved in the whole plan of salvation, and manner of its application. The plan is one, the specific object of which, so far as the present point is concerned, was the salvation of a people from their sins. The means by which this was to be accomplished were two:—first, the death of the Mediator, as satisfaction on their behalf to the penalty of the violated law; and second, the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Both of these are entirely independent of any merit or agency of those upon whom the salvation is bestowed. The application of the atoning blood must, manifestly, be at the mere discretion of God, as it is a thing which, in the very nature of the case, no man could merit, and which, therefore, no man could claim, as of right. And the renewing of the soul is a work, prior to which, no man is reconciled to God; and of which, therefore, the antecedent consent or acquiescence of the subject of it cannot be predicated. Christ's people are indeed willing in the day of his power; but that willingness does not anticipate, but results from, the power. They are born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. The salvation being, therefore, in all its parts, the work of God, alone, who could as easily have saved all as any, the fact that, whilst some are saved, others are left to their own way, and consequent ruin, is proof of a distinguishing grace exercised toward those who are saved. The fact that a certain specific number will at length reign in glory, as the Mediator's reward, who were all foreknown by him, implies, unavoidably, that, in consenting to bear the curse, these were the very persons whose salvation he anticipated, and in consideration of whose salvation he agreed to suffer. It is also certain that

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he did not agree to save those who will at last perish. Nor was their salvation promised to him in the covenant. Their redemption, therefore, was no part of the consideration, impelled by which, he bore the cross. They were given to him; but not as a willing people. In regard to them the promise is, "I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him."—Psalm lxxxix. 23. The fact that in the covenant itself the human race was distinguished into two parties,—the people of Christ, and his enemies; and that the former are given to him as willing and joyful subjects of his sceptre of grace, whilst the others are consigned to the sword of his wrath, stands out everywhere conspicuous upon the face of the Scriptures. The line of distinction is broadly drawn in the very first announcement of the redeeming seed:—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."—Gen. iii. 15. Certainly, that blessed promise did not include in its provisions of grace the seed of the serpent. The same demarcation is seen in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, in immediate connection with the oath of the covenant:—"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. . . . The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." Such are the terms used, on the one hand. On the other:—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." So in the fifty-third of Isaiah, whilst the leading thought is that of salvation to his seed, the perdition of his enemies is not omitted:—"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong."—Isa. liii. 12.

On this subject, the testimony of our Saviour himself is full and unequivocal. Thus, speaking of the affectionate relation subsisting between him and his apostles, he says to them, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen."—John xiii. 18. In the parable of the good shepherd, he says, "I am the

good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."—John x. 14-16. Here he asserts his sheep to be distinctly recognised by him; and that it is for them, as such, that he lays down his life. He further declares that his sheep are not all of the Jewish fold, nor all yet gathered; but that all must at length be gathered into his one fold; thus indicating that, by the sheep for whom he died, he did not mean actual believers only, who were then living, but the whole number of those whom he will call by his grace, and at last gather into the heavenly fold. Still more unequivocally he goes on to say to the Jews, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John x. 26-29. Thus he testifies to the Jews,—not, as some would have it, that they were not his sheep because they would not believe; but the reverse of this:—that the reason why they did not believe was, that they were not of his sheep,—that if they were his sheep they would hear his voice and believe. Again, he declares that his sheep were a gift to him from the Father,—that he gives them eternal life, and that they shall never perish. Should any one still question whether, in the covenant, the elect were expressly given to the Son, and their salvation distinctly provided for in that gift, let him listen to the plea of the Son to the Father, in which he makes express appeal to the covenant, and claims the fulfilment of its terms:—"Father, the hour is come: glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that (*πάν ὃ δέδωκας αὐτῷ*) to every one whom thou hast given him, he may give eternal life." "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me



where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."—John xvii. 1, 2, 9, 24. Paul tells the Ephesians that the saints were by God the Father "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself."—Eph. i. 4, 5.

The doctrine of the covenant election of grace is fundamental to the whole plan of salvation as set forth in these pages. Particularly is it implied in the fact, that those who are, by the terms of the covenant, given to Christ as co-heirs in the promises, are, specifically, his seed, the members of his body. But, to this point we shall return hereafter.

The seal of the covenant was the oath of God.—"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent." We have seen that the promises of the covenant, although primarily addressed to the Son, were repeatedly reannounced to the people of Christ, to Abraham and David, and their seed. So it was with the oath. Says the Angel of the covenant to Abraham, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xxii. 16–18. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, tells the multitude that "God had sworn with an oath to David, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."—Acts ii. 30. Such is the rock of adamant on which the provisions of the covenant stand,—the oath of God. "That by two immutable things," says Paul, "in which it was impossible for God to lie," namely, his counsel and his oath, "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—Heb. vi. 18. Heaven and earth may pass away; cherubim transformed into devils may plan and rage; the powers of earth may combine to oppose: yet shall that covenant stand. All its conditions shall be fulfilled, and all its purposes accomplished; whether of glory to God, salvation and blessedness to man, or of confusion and perdition to Satan and his followers, the enemies of God.

The most important provisions of the covenant had respect to man, securing his restoration from ruin and exaltation to eternal life and glory. But we have abundant evidence that the grand design of the whole transaction was much more extensive than any thing involved in the mere salvation of man or destruction of Satan. As in the eternal plan, which we have formerly considered, so here, the final end of the whole dispensation is to be sought in God himself. It is, and can be, nothing less than the revelation of himself,—the discovery to the creatures of his uncreated glory. In the dispensation of such a scheme, the consummate office of the Son is that of Revealer of the Father. Such is the testimony of the Scriptures; and such is the meaning of some of the names there given to the Son. Thus, he is announced to David, and described by Paul, as the Adam that is from above. He is called the great Prophet, the faithful and true Witness, and the Logos, or Word of God; as being the means of God's communication with the creatures. Hence, too, his name of Mediator, as the medium of access to God, not for men only, but for every creature. "No man (*οὐδεὶς*, none, no being) hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. That such is the fact, in respect to the angelic hosts as well as man, appears from this:—that, whilst no creature can attain to any knowledge of the invisible God by immediate perception, or in any other way than by contemplating what he has done, the Son of God is the Mediator through whom all the works of God are wrought, as well of creation and providence as of grace. "By him God made the worlds." And if, to the heavenly intelligences, "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead,"—Rom. i. 20;—if, to them, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork,"—Psalm xix. 1; in these they see that glory as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, by whose word of power they all are sustained, as by it they were created. In reference to this office of making known the Father, Paul





tells the Colossians that the Son is "the image of the invisible God,"—Col. i. 15; and the Hebrews that he is "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,"—Heb. i. 3; and, in both instances, establishes the assertion upon the ground that he is the Maker of all things. To attempt to glance, even, at any large proportion of the evidence on this point, which is found in all the teachings of our Saviour himself, is impossible and unnecessary. When the Jews persecuted him for working a miracle on the Sabbath, and claiming God as his Father, thereby making himself equal with God, he replied to them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."—John v. 19. To his disciple Philip, asking him to show them the Father, he says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"—John xiv. 9. He tells his disciples, "All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I that he [the Comforter] shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you."—John xvi. 15. And, in his prayer to the Father, he says, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me."—John xvii. 4, 6. So Paul declares, that "great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh, . . . seen of angels."—1 Tim. iii. 16. In respect to the relation of the work of Christ to the angelic hosts, our space will not permit an extended discussion. It is, however, evident that his office is one involving, not only dominion over them, but beneficent purposes toward them, and that the scheme of the covenant contemplated, as the ultimate end had in view, the revelation of God, to all the intelligent creatures, in the person and work of Christ his Son.

In order to the fulfilment of the purposes contemplated in his investiture with this office, it was necessary that Christ should be, not only the Saviour of men, but the Maker of all things, the Lord of Providence, and Head over all; as, in all these, the

glory of the Godhead shines. It was, therefore, requisite that the Son should be placed upon the throne, in the midst of that same eternity in which the covenant was made. This, indeed, is implied in the very announcement of such a compact between such parties. The bounds and limitations which time and space, and finite intelligence, set to the conceptions and actions of men, have no application to Him who inhabits eternity and immensity; alike unlimited by either of those dimensions. To the holiness and truth of God, the mutual pledges of the covenant are equivalent to their fulfilment. To his eternity, the work of Christ on earth was from everlasting as fully present in its whole process and completion, as when, in the annals of time, the Son walked among men, and laboured and died. The throne was, therefore, possessed by the Son, from the sealing of the compact; both as being thus a matter of purchased right, and as his installation was the means, contemplated in it, for the fulfilling of the ends of the covenant. Hence, the declaration of Wisdom, in the book of Proverbs:—"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was."—Prov. viii. 23. As we have seen, the word, "set up," is the same which in the second Psalm declares the coronation of the Son:—"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill."—Psalm ii. 6. The transaction is the same. And, as in the Psalm the date is fixed by coincidence with the birth of the Son,—"this day have I begotten thee,"—so, here, they are associated, and together dated "from everlasting."

The extent of the field embraced in the purview of the covenant was proportionate to the dignity of the parties, and the *§ 12. Its pur-* grandeur and importance of the objects. Without *view, all things.* limitation or reserve, it comprehended in its provisions all things in the universe. Its conditions embraced every creature and event; all time and eternity. We have already, in a former chapter, considered the leading features of an eternal plan according to which God has seen good to reveal himself to his creatures. The covenant was the means, devised by infinite wisdom, of making known to the creatures the immutability of the council embodied in that plan; and of securing



its infallible accomplishment. The provisions, therefore, are co-extensive and identical with the features of the plan; and their end is one and the same,—the revelation of God to his intelligent creatures. In the process of administration, man is the great centre of interest and action. The first Adam, the image of God and crown of the creation, enthroned amid the joyous shoutings of the sons of God; and his apostasy and ruin;—the second Adam, the Son of God and of man, the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person; his eternal generation; his creation of all things; his incarnation and death; his triumphant conflict with Satan; his exaltation and glory, as man swaying the sceptre of universal empire, and receiving the homage of every knee in heaven and earth; the general judgment, where the man Christ Jesus and his people shall sit, and, in presence of the universe, determine the eternal state of every creature, devils, angels and reprobate men; and the final and eternal pre-eminence of man in the persons of Christ and his people;—these are the grand features in the whole amazing scheme, and landmarks in the process of its accomplishment. Subservient to these are all other creatures and events. In the light of this covenant, our earth is the great centre of attraction to the universe, and the high throne of God's revealed glory. The material universe, in all its magnificence and starry beauty, is but a chaplet, to adorn the brow of that Second Man, in whose unsearchable person the Maker of them all is incarnate. They all were made by him and for him; he upholdeth them all by the word of his power; and in him they consist. The angelic throng,—creatures of the power, and dependent upon the upholding goodness, of the Son of man,—are all man's servants, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation; and students, desiring to look into, and comprehend, the mystery of God, revealed in the persons of the first and second Adam and the history of man. Man was the prize, for whom the Son of God left his throne, and entered the lists with Satan and all his hosts; and earth was its scene. And when, at length, the mystery of God shall be finished, and the Son shall have triumphed over every foe,—when he shall have cast Satan and death and hell and all

the enemies into the bottomless pit, and sealed the door, no more to be opened, because there is no more curse,—when he shall have rescued from the grave the dust of his people, and received them to his own glory,—when, by his whole wondrous administration, he shall have made known the invisible God, to the blessed angelic hosts, in all the glorious symmetry of his unsearchable perfections and unspeakable grace, and shall have established them in perfect holiness and infallible allegiance, forever,—when the whole scheme of the covenant shall be completed, and all its ends accomplished, and the Son, accompanied by all the angels of God, shall draw near the throne, to deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father,—the redeemed of men will be the attendants nearest his person; and the child of Mary will be He, the attraction of every eye, his beauties the delight of every heart, and the lustre of his deeds the theme of every tongue. And the spontaneous burst of rapturous praise, which will pour in mingled harmony from every voice and harp in heaven, as the sound of mighty thunderings, and as the sound of many waters, will extol and celebrate the glory of the throne, and majesty of the kingdom, of the Son of David, the Son of man. Nor, in all the blessed and adoring throng, are there any but debtors to the power the goodness and grace of Him whose praise they celebrate. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."—Col. i. 16–20.





## CHAPTER XX.

## THE SECOND ADAM.

In the days of Herod, the king of Judea, "the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. . . . And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."—Luke i. 26-38.

The Scriptures are very particular in setting forth the true and proper humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his derivation of it, by a true generation, from the common nature and parents of the race. In the original promise, he is described as the seed of the woman. In the covenant with Abraham, he is

constantly designated as his seed. In the oath to David, the promise is, "I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom."—2 Sam. vii. 12. Similar is the language of Peter, on the day of Pentecost:—David "knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."—Acts ii. 30. To the same purpose are the genealogies which trace his lineage through David and Abraham back to Adam the father of the race, and the woman, to whom he was promised as her seed. Nor was his genealogy thus traced merely for the purpose of showing the fulfilment of the promises; but those promises were made because that which they revealed to the faith of God's people was essential to the salvation of man. None but a child of Adam could perform the work which was laid upon the Son of God.

The fact, however, of the true humanity of the second Adam, is not called in question, and need not, therefore, be insisted upon. It is of more importance that we understand what is meant by it, and involved in it. The subject is sometimes discussed in such a manner as to imply that all that is involved in the humanity of the Mediator, is, the possession of body and soul in the likeness of man. But this falls entirely short of the truth in the case. An incarnate angel might precisely conform to the likeness of man. He might be possessed of precisely the same physical, intellectual and moral traits and attributes which characterize our race. But such a being could not have filled the place of the man, Christ Jesus, in the Mediatorial person and work. To the Mediator two duties were assigned, both of which equally required him to be a true shoot from the stock of Adam. He must meet and satisfy the curse, to which, by the fall, man became obnoxious; and he must acquire a title to eternal life, by the terms of the very covenant which Adam violated.

§ 2. *The Mediator must be a man.* In order to satisfy the curse of the law on man's behalf, it was every way necessary that the Mediator should be a partaker of man's nature. In the nature that sinned must the atonement for sin be made. Since





it was the apostasy of man's nature which had incurred the curse, inexorable justice demands satisfaction against that very nature; and he who will meet and satisfy the curse, must appear at the bar clothed in the nature which is thus under condemnation.\* Further, the penalty to be met and satisfied was of a form appropriate to man's nature; and in that form does justice, which knows no compromise, demand satisfaction.

That the second Adam should be the seed of the first, was equally necessary to the other part of his work,—his acquiring a covenant right to eternal life, on behalf of man. The transgression of Adam violated, but did not abrogate, the covenant. As we have already seen, the law and covenant, as originally given to man, and inscribed on his heart, were inseparably incorporated with each other. In all the announcements of the law, made after the fall, the covenant is recognised as an element in the document; the terms,—“The man that doeth them shall live in them.” Not only so, but the perfection of God's wisdom, the immutability of his nature and law, and his justice and truth, all forbid that man should ever possess eternal life on any other than the precise terms at first proposed to him. Those terms were in alternative form:—“Do, and live. Transgress, and die.” To assume that man may ever attain to life upon any other conditions, is to suppose that the promise of this covenant is forfeited, and yet its curse not enforced. And this would be an impeachment of every attribute of the divine nature. No favour can ever be possessed by man, in derogation of the curse

\* “Hominem verum esse oportuit, ex genere humano quod peccavit propagatum, non ex nihilo creatum, aut oculis delapsum, quin et omnibus infirmitatibus nostris obnoxium, peccato excepto. 1. Propter justitiam Dei, quæ postulabat ut eadem natura humana, quæ peccaverat, pro peccatis lueret. ‘Anima enim quæ peccavit, ipsa morietur.’ ‘Et quocunque die comederis, ex eo, morte morieris.’ Verus igitur homo ex posteritate Adami qui peccavit, pro hominibus, quod ab ipsis exigebatur, dependere debebat. Huc faciunt dicta: ‘Quia per hominem mors, per hominem resurrectio mortuorum.’ ‘Unus Mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus.’ ‘Assumpsit semen Abraham, unde debuit per omnia fratribus similis fieri,’ &c. Ideo apostolus dicit nos esse consepultos Christo per baptismum, et cum Christo resurrexisse. Augustinus De Vera Religione,—‘Ipsa natura suscipienda, quæ liberanda.’”—*Corp. Doct. Chr., etc., Ex ore D. Zach. Ursini, in expl. Catech. xvi. 2.*

of the covenant; nor in any way, which does not fulfil its terms. They were the conditions, upon which God at the beginning suspended his favour to man; and “he is in one mind, and who can turn him?” Christ's headship was created by the eternal covenant. But the condition of that covenant and headship was the fulfilment of all the provisions and terms of the covenant made with Adam. Here we have the key to the fact that the law of God, as proclaimed from Sinai, was set forth specifically in covenant form; and, as such, identified with the covenant made with Abraham. Thus Moses says to Israel, “The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb;” and then recites the ten commandments as the terms of that covenant. (Deut. v. 2–21.) The tables of stone on which the commandments were written, are thence called the tables of the covenant; (Deut. ix. 9–11, 15;) and the coffer in which they were kept, “the ark of the covenant.” (Deut. x. 3, 4, 8.) Says God, by Jeremiah, “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord.”—Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. In short, the covenant character of that announcement of the law is continually insisted upon in the Scriptures, and does not admit of question. Nor does this remark apply merely to the moral law, but with equal emphasis to the whole ceremonial ritual of Moses; which, as well in its whole scope, as in each particular of its details, proclaims covenant relations between Israel and God,—relations of favour, conditioned upon the fundamental principle of the law of nature, that is, obedience. Further, the Sinai covenant is set forth as the same which was made with the patriarchs, the fathers of Israel. “It shall come to pass,” says Moses, “if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers: and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee; . . . thou shalt be blessed above all people.”—Deut. vii. 12–14. Obedience to the



law is thus made to Israel the condition, on which, the promises given to Abraham, should be fulfilled. The law, then, was the conditional term of the Abrahamic covenant. This is expressly intimated by Jehovah, when he says of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."—Gen. xviii. 19. That memorable trial of Abraham's faith, in which he was required to sacrifice his son, was a signal announcement of the fundamental relation which the law sustained to the covenant. Not only did it prove and render illustrious the faith of the patriarch; but, on the other hand, it proclaimed implicit, unquestioning and perfect obedience to be the condition of the promise. And the fact that neither Israel nor Abraham could possibly acquire a title to the promises, for themselves, on such terms, only renders the more manifest the design of all these transactions as bearing upon the coming and work of the Son of God. They announce the covenant as surviving the fall, in the unimpaired integrity of its terms. They point to that Seed, to whom the promise of Sinai, as well as those to Abraham, was made, and in whom all the terms of the covenant shall be fulfilled. It was, therefore, necessary that the Mediator should assume the very nature, to which the covenant law was addressed, and in which it was inscribed; so as to be in a position to claim the life therein promised, upon performing the conditions prescribed. He must not only be *like* Adam, in the endowments of his person, and the inscription in his heart; but *of* him, to whom the law was addressed, and the covenant given; so that he might obey the very mandate thus given; and enjoy the very promise which Adam received.

Accordingly, the Scriptures not only insist upon the fact that the Redeemer was a man. This they rather assume than formally assert. But, going beyond this, they lay much stress upon the derivation of his human nature and person from the common fountain of the race. Hence, the terms used on the subject are commonly such as give emphasis to the paternal relation of Adam and the other ancestors of the Redeemer, as the cause of

his humanity,—such as express his native inbeing in them. Thus, as we have seen, he is constantly called the seed of Adam, of Abraham and of David. He is represented as proceeding out of the bowels of these patriarchs; is called "a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots;" and is predicted by the name, THE BRANCH. (Isa. xi. 1; Zech. iii. 8). The title by which Jesus designates himself is equally significant on this subject. He does not call himself, the man, or, the man from heaven; but, the "*Son of Man.*" This name he applies to himself continually. And, even when adjured by the high priest whether he was the Son of God, in his affirmative answer he remarkably includes the name significant of his human relations. "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 'And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.'"—Mark xiv. 61, 62.

The design of the Mediator, in assuming such a relation to us, Paul states:—"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, (*γενόμενον*), born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. In the epistle to the Hebrews, the same view is presented. The dominion which was given to man is represented as realized in the person of Jesus. His assumption of humanity was in order "that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man." The sufferings by means of which he will bring many sons to glory, are referred to the fact, that "both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all (*ἐξ ἑνός*) from one;" to wit, Adam; "for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." The apostle then appeals to the scriptures which assert a relation of kindred between Christ and his people:—"I will declare thy name unto my brethren;" and, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Hence he argues that, "forasmuch as the children (*κοινωνήσας*) are communicants, or joint partakers in flesh and blood, he also, (*παρὰ πλησίον μετέσχε*), in the same manner, took part in them; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;





and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For, verily, (οὐ ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται,) he does not take [into union with himself] the angels; but he takes the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest."—Heb. ii. 14–17. The same principle is presented by the apostle when he says of the doctrine of the resurrection, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."—1 Cor. xv. 20, 21. In the nature that incurred death must death be met and vanquished.

Of the assumption of humanity by the Son of God, Paul tells the Philippians that he "(ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων), being at first in the nature of God, did not think the being as God (ἀρπαγμὸν) a thing to be eagerly retained; but emptied himself, taking (μορφῇ δούλου) the nature of a servant, being born in the likeness of man; and, being found in attitude and condition as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient until death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 6–8. That the word, (μορφῇ,) "form," means much more than a mere external likeness, is certain, from several considerations. 1. That "form" with which the Son is said to have been at first invested, he is not represented ever to have resigned. That of which he emptied himself was not (μορφῇ Θεοῦ) "the form of God," but the being (ἴσα Θεῷ) "as God." And his possession of the likeness of man was consequent upon and subordinate to his assumption of (μορφῇ δούλου) "the form of a servant." Did (μορφῇ), form, mean no more than, an image or likeness, there would be no propriety in the change of terms thus occurring. Having been announced as clothed with the form of God, his humiliation would have been described as the resignation of that form; and his assumption of the form of a servant would not have been stated as something distinct from his being made in the likeness of man. Evidently, the being (ἴσα Θεῷ) as God, and, (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων,) in the likeness of man, are stated as particulars under the more extensive meaning of the word, (μορφῇ), form. It was because he

was originally "in the form of God," that he was "as God;" and, by taking upon him the "form of a servant," he acquired the likeness of man. 2. If the word, "form," is to be interpreted as meaning the likeness of God, it will admit of no tolerable explanation which does not involve the possession of attributes like those of God. But the likeness of the Son to the Father consists in the possession of the very same incommunicable attributes. In this sense, the form of God is equivalent to the possession of a community of nature with God. 3. Paul is magnifying the condescension of Christ, as an example for us. But his condescension consisted in the fact that he, being truly God, laid not aside his divine nature, but the robes of divinity, and assumed not the mere form and semblance of a man, but a true manhood, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Should any one aim to celebrate the condescension of the emperor Charles, by dwelling on the fact that he laid aside the robes of royalty, and assumed the style of a subject; and altogether ignore the more important matter that he actually became a private person, —it would be very weak and absurd. Yet, such will be the argument of Paul, if we deny him to speak of the divine nature, which was native to the Son of God, and which he condescended to veil, by a real assumption of the nature of man. By the word, (μορφῇ), form, therefore, we understand all that is expressed by (ἴσα and ὁμοίωμα), equality and likeness, but including the nature and attributes upon which those expressions are based. As applied to God, it denotes the divine essence, clothed with all glorious attributes and perfections. As appropriated to man, it indicates the nature, person, attributes and relations of a true humanity.\* The argument, therefore, of the apostle is this:—"Christ, being invested with the nature, attributes and honour of eternal Godhead, did not think the being arrayed in glory as God, a thing to be eagerly retained; but emptied himself, taking the nature, person and condition of a servant; and was born in the

\* "Μορφή denotat essentiam Dei, non nudam, sed suis vestitam qualitatibus, et proprietatibus essentialibus, gloria, majestate, etc.; quomodo et naturam humanam cum suis quoque qualitatibus consideratam."—Zanchius, in *Poli Synopsis*, in loco.



likeness of man. And, being found in the attitude and position of a man, subject to the law, he humbled himself, being obedient until death, even the death of the cross." He took to himself the nature and condition of a servant, as, from being the Law-giver, he became subject to the law; which is further intimated by the statement that he was found,—to wit, by the law and justice of God,—in the attitude of a man, as toward it; and was obedient to the law and the curse until death. So, the prophet writes, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."—Isa. liii. 11. He became a servant to the law and the curse, by taking to himself the nature of man, which was under their bondage. "He was found (*σχήματι ὡς ἀνθρώπου*) in fashion as a man." The word, (*σχήμα*), fashion, expresses rather condition and attitude, than appearance. He was found in the position, as toward the law, which belonged to man, subject to its precept, and responsible to, and involved in, its curse. And, being thus found by the law, he, as a man, bowed in perfect obedience to all its requirements, until it had nailed him to the cross, under the curse of man's sin.

In addition to the reasons already given, there were others, of which we shall see more in the sequel, making it requisite that the Redeemer should take a part in our nature. It was necessary in order to the mystical union, by which he assumed the punishment of our sins, and gives us a title in his righteousness, as we have seen Paul to declare:—"Forasmuch as the children were joint partakers in flesh and blood, he also in the same manner took part in them, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily, he does not take hold of the angels, (or, take them to himself,) but he takes the seed of Abraham."—Heb. ii. 14–16. This language seems plainly to refer to that assumption of the seed of Abraham into union with himself, of which we shall presently speak. Christ's humanity was necessary, so that he might be to us a quickening spirit, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in his mediatorial person, and imparted thence; and that he might have the feeling of our infirmities, by being in all

points tempted like as we are; so that we might have confidence and access with boldness unto the throne of grace. It was necessary that, in the very nature, by taking advantage of the weakness of which, Satan hoped to defeat the purposes of God, the enemy himself should be overthrown. Thus is he put to utter confusion and shame, upon his chosen field of anticipated triumphs.

Whilst the Son of God took to himself the nature of man, by which the apostasy was wrought, and which lay under the curse of the apostasy, he did not assume it as apostate. *§ 4. He was without sin.* In taking the human into union with his divine nature, he received it in perfect holiness and conformity to the law. This was a necessary result of the remarkable manner of his birth:—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Here the angel attributes the unsullied purity and holiness of the child to the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit. The hypostatic union of the divine and human natures, in the person of the Mediator, was not wrought by the Holy Spirit; but is immediate, and consequent upon the immediate power of the Second Person of the Godhead taking up the human nature into union with his own. Were it otherwise,—were the union one wrought by the mediate agency of the Spirit,—the result would be, not one person, but two; not a hypostatic, but a relative, union. The only office, therefore, which can be attributed to the Holy Spirit, in the incarnation of the Son, was the generation of a body and soul, out of the human nature of the virgin, free from sin:—"Christ the Son of God became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived, by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her, yet without sin."\* On this subject, Marck, having stated the conveyance of original sin by generation, says, "Nor must Christ, therefore, be subject to its guilt; not because he never was in Adam, as the Anabaptists and Weigelians imagine; since his genealogy is expressly terminated in

\* Larger Catechism, Qu. 87.





Adam, (Luke iii. 38); but, first, because he was not propagated from Adam as to his whole person,—for, as we commonly say, sins are personals,—but only as to his humanity, and that, manifestly, by an extraordinary and supernatural nativity; wherefore, also, he was not tithed in the loins of Levi. (Heb. vii. 9, 10.) Second, strictly, he was not in Adam when he sinned, because he came into the world, not by virtue of the blessing given before the fall,—‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,’ (Gen. i. 28),—but by the special promise, following the fall, concerning the seed of the woman, which should bruise the head of the serpent. (Gen. iii. 15.)”\*

Whilst it was necessary that the Mediator be thus truly man, having a proper communion in our nature, this was not alone sufficient. No man—no finite being—could perform the work to which he was ordained:—“Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”—Isa. ix. 6. Such are the titles by which he is announced. And, when he was about to come into the world, he is described, by the evangelist, as “Emmanuel,—God with us.” As to the fact of the divinity of the Saviour of the world, we shall not enter into a separate discussion. If the cumulative argument, which is presented in the whole doctrine of this work, be not conclusive, on this point, we should despair of inducing conviction by a special plea. That the Mediator between God and apostate man must himself be God, is certain, from every light in which the subject can be viewed. To no one function of the mediatorial work would any mere creature, even the highest, be adequate. Two or three points may for the present serve to illustrate the whole.

It was essential that the Mediator should be superior to and independent of the law, in order that, by a voluntary subjection to it, he might restore that honour which was taken away by man’s transgression. This the obedience of no mere creature could do. Having done all, the creatures must say, “We have

done what was our duty to do.” But when the eternal Son of God, having perfectly obeyed every precept of the law, bows his neck to the stroke of its curse, then is its honour more than restored. It shines with a lustre which it never had before.

Equally requisite was the divinity of Christ, in order that he might have power over his own life. The lives of the creatures are gifts of God’s goodness, which are merely loaned, to be employed at his will and in his service. They have no right either to forfeit or surrender them; as, in so doing, they are attempting to alienate what belongs to God, and so are robbing him. And, were this not so, still would they be incompetent to acquire any merit available to others, even by the sacrifice of life; since, having done all, they have but done their own duty. In order, therefore, that the eternal Priest should have a right to give his own life, he must have a supreme and absolute right in that life himself, and such an independence of the law that his offering shall be gratuitous, and therefore meritorious.

It was necessary that Christ should be God, as well as man, in order that, in the mediatorial person, there should be power to meet and exhaust the infinite curse of the law which was due to man’s sin. This is the reason that, in all the teachings of the New Testament, so much significance is attributed to his resurrection. Having assumed the punishment of his people’s sins, and, under it, bowed to the stroke of the curse, it was impossible that he should have risen from the dead until the curse thus accepted had exhausted its demands,—until death itself expired. And since this could never take place in the person of any merely human or created being, the curse being infinite, it was necessary that he who undertook such an office should be truly divine; and the fact that “Christ both died and rose and revived,”—inasmuch as it shows him to have worn out and abolished death,—proves him to be the Son of God, with power, the very power of the infinite God.

The divinity of the Redeemer was equally requisite to the application of his redemption, and to all the ultimate ends for which it was undertaken. No one but the Omniscient could know his own so that none of them should be lost. None but

\* Marcii Medul. Theol., Locus vi. 37.





God could have power to send the Holy Spirit to renew, sanctify and raise them from the dead. None but the Almighty could overcome with utter overthrow Satan and all God's enemies, judge the universe, and assign to each their appropriate place and portion.

But we have not yet noticed all the wonderful characteristics of the second Adam. The person of Jesus, which embraces thus,

*§ 8. Christ's* in an incomprehensible union and identity with the  
*body the* son of Mary, Him who fills immensity and inhabits  
*church.* eternity, comprehends at the same time, in a union and identity only less close than this, the whole multitude of his chosen people of all ages, whether past or to come. He is the head of the body, the church, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 23.

It would be a most unsuitable and defective representation, which should describe the human head in such a way as to leave out of the account the body with which it is connected, and the relations between them; since in these relations is the solution of almost every feature of the head. Equally inadequate and erroneous is any view of the person of the Mediator which fails to comprehend, as essential features of it, the church, which is his body, and the union by which they are one. To fit him to become the Head of that body, every characteristic of his person was designed. And, as thus fitted and related, every fact in his history is to be studied, or it will not be understood. In no one aspect can the Mediator be viewed in which the ignoring of his headship will not mar the conception. The significance of every feature is to be sought in his church. It is the complement of his own individual person,—the fulness which completes and reveals its symmetry.

The reality and importance of the union, by which Christ and his people are one body, is testified in the Scriptures, in many places, and illustrated by a variety of figures. Of these, it will be sufficient to notice some of the most frequent and significant.

1. It is compared to the stones of a building, which are all cemented together into one; and in which Christ is represented by the corner-stone, as being that on which all rests secure.

Says the Psalmist, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner;" that is, the chief stone of the foundation.—Psalm cxviii, 22. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation."—Isa. xxviii, 16. Hence Peter says, of Christ, "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also as lively stones are built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. ii. 4, 5. And Paul says that the saints are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God, through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 20–22. To David, the promise was made that his son should build a house to the name of God. The spiritual temple, here described, is that house.

2. Another figure, frequently used to describe the relation of Christ and his people, is that of a tree and its branches. "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for severed from me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5. Hence Paul exhorts us, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him."—Col. ii. 6, 7. He describes believers as "planted together in the likeness of his death,"—Rom. vi. 5; and represents the whole human race as branches of the one or the other,—the wild olive, or the good.—Rom. xi. 17–24.

3. The union is compared to that of the wife and her husband; and of the members of the body;—figures which are essentially the same, as is fully illustrated in the argument of Paul, in Eph. v. 23–32:—"The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body." "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of



his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." When God made Eve of a rib from the side of Adam, and brought her to him, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother," &c.—Gen. ii. 23, 24. How intimate the union, of which the apostle speaks, between Christ and his people, is evident from the appeal which he makes to this original oneness of Adam, and identity of Eve in him. This figure, derived from the marriage of the first Adam, is the one most commonly used in the Scriptures on the present subject. It is the subject of the forty-fifth Psalm. It constitutes the theme of one entire book,—The Song of Songs. It recurs continually in the prophets and epistles, and sheds a soft and radiant beauty on the imagery of the book of the Revelation; in which are unfolded the glories of the final inheritance of Christ and his people,—the second Adam and his Bride.

4. The unity of Adam and his race is used as another representation of that here spoken of. Of this, the preceding pages have presented abundant illustrations. "If any should urge that the similitudes of Adam and his seed, and of married couples, do make rather for a relative, than a real union, betwixt Christ and us; let them consider that all nations are really made of one blood, which was first in Adam, (Acts xvii. 26;) and that the first woman was made out of the body of Adam, and was really, 'bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh.' And by this first married couple, the mystical union of Christ and his church is eminently resembled. (Gen. ii. 22–24, with Eph. v. 30–32.) And yet, it supposeth both these resemblances in the nearness and fulness of them, because those that are joined to the Lord are not only one flesh, but one spirit, with him."\*

5. The transcendent comparison, which is used on this subject, is that of the union of the Father, and the Son, in the blessed Godhead. When seated at the table, the night in which

\* Marshall on Sanctification, Direction iii. 2.

he was betrayed, the Saviour engaged in a large discourse with his disciples. In his previous public ministry, he had rarely and slightly touched upon the eminent dignity of his own person, as divine. He now, however, enlarges upon this theme; and in so doing states his reason for it. Hitherto he had been with them, and had taught them, as they were able to bear it. But now, they having gained some degree of strength and maturity, and being about to enjoy the gift of the Holy Spirit, he comforts them, in view of their coming bereavement, with clear and abundant statements as to his own personal dignity, and the cause and end of his approaching sufferings. "These things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you." "I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth."—John xvi. 4, 12, 13. In this remarkable discourse, there are two doctrines, which constitute the fundamental basis of the entire communication. The first, is that of his own true divinity,—his co-equality and oneness with the Father. The second, is the unity of his people with him, and his unity with them. These two doctrines, he represents as alike true and inseparable; and upon them, together, he founds the precious promises and encouragements which soothed and comforted the hearts of his beloved and stricken friends. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me."—John xiv. 7–11. With this, compare the words of Jesus to the Jews:—"I and my Father are one." "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the





Father is in me, and I in him."—John x. 30, 37, 38. Afterward, Jesus, having insisted upon the coming and office of the Comforter, adds, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 20. In the beginning of the fifteenth chapter, under the figure of the vine and branches, he clearly explains what he means by this inbeing of his people in him. As the vital principle of the vine unites the branches to it, and imparts to them life, verdure and fruitfulness,—so is it between him and them. The Spirit which dwelt in him, imparted to and abiding in them, shall unite them to him, and impart to them his knowledge, and lead them in holiness. In the subsequent part of the discourse, he cheers their hearts with abundant consolations derived from the doctrines thus attested; accompanied with corresponding exhortations and admonitions:—"Ye now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day, (*ἐμὲ οὐκ ἐρωτήσετε οὐδέν*), ye shall not any more question me, [being taught all things by the indwelling Spirit.] Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, in my name, he will give it you." "At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world and go to the Father." "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace."—John xvi. 22-33. Thus, the entire discourse rests upon, and recurs continually to, the doctrine of his own oneness with the Father, and his people's inbeing in him.

At the close of this discourse, Jesus bears his people to the Father's bosom, in that wonderful prayer which John records. He prays, "Holy Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And

the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."—John xvii. 11, 20-23.

That our Saviour, in the language quoted from his discourse, designed to assert his own supreme divinity,—his nativity, equality and oneness with the Father,—will not be questioned by any who believe in that divinity. That he, in the same connection, speaks of a real oneness between him and his people, wrought by the engrafting of the Holy Ghost; and that he represents this doctrine as inseparably associated with the other, and correlative to it, is equally obvious. "Ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you." That the exposition of these doctrines and their results occupies the entire discourse, the most casual inspection will demonstrate. It is impossible, therefore, to avoid the conclusion, that, when in his prayer he employs the same phraseology, he has in view the same things, of which he has just been telling his beloved disciples. However far, therefore, the union which subsists between Christ and his people may fall short of that between the Father and the Son, it is not thought unworthy, by the Son himself, to be compared with it. "That they may be one, as we are.—That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.—That they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Should it be suggested, that the unity here spoken of is merely that of mutual love and sympathy,—the answer is obvious. Jesus has just before showed his disciples the impossibility of their being able to do any thing good, without being members of him, by a real union. At the same time, he had promised them, that he would pray the Father to send them the Holy Spirit, by whom that union is wrought. He immediately offers the prayer, in which he employs the very words which he had just used to describe the real union itself. It is preposterous to suppose, that, in such circumstances, he means to be un-



derstood as confining his thoughts to the end, to the exclusion of the essential means; which he has so magnified, just before. Further, even were we to allow that by the oneness, of which he speaks in the prayer, is meant mutual love and harmony, yet is the means also unequivocally described:—"I in them,—that they may be one."

Whilst the union of the divine nature and the human, and of Christ and his church, in the person of the Mediator, constitute the two glories of his most glorious person, they are also its two great mysteries. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh."—1 Tim. iii. 16. So, says Paul, "This is a great mystery." I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 32. But, whilst these are equally mysteries, they are mysteries, of which, the latter is as unequivocally revealed to us as the former. "The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is, Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Col. i. 26, 27. Here, however, it is proper to notice a fact which is illustrated in this language of Paul. The common design of the word, mystery, in the Scriptures, is to indicate not a necessary inscrutability, but the fact that a thing has not been hitherto disclosed. Such is its meaning, as used by Paul, respecting the typical relation of Adam and Eve to Christ and the church. It is true that the union between these is inscrutable, so far as exhaustive comprehension is implied. But it is no more true of this, than of any other of the leading truths of the gospel. The remark applies as fully to the doctrine of the Trinity; to the eternal generation, the procession of the Holy Spirit, the incarnation, the very union of the soul and body of man. And yet, there is reason to apprehend that the arbitrary appropriation of the term, mystical, to this alone, of all the doctrines of revelation, has induced or cherished a disposition to look upon it as peculiarly incomprehensible, and of little practical importance; and thus to work, to a great extent, its actual exclusion, in many cases, from a place in the theology of the pulpit. The doctrine is, indeed, beyond finite com-

prehension. But only so, as are all the deep things of God; which carnal blindness is indisposed to search, and finite capacity incompetent to measure. "The mystery,—Christ in you, the hope of glory," Paul declares to have been hid, indeed, from ages and generations, but now to be manifested and made known to the saints. However incomprehensible, therefore,—this doctrine is both expressly revealed, and clearly defined; and its distinct and constant recognition is as essential to correct conceptions of the way of salvation, as is that of the incarnation itself. We shall, therefore, distinctly notice the most important points which are brought out on the subject, in the Scriptures.\*

1. Christ himself is the efficient author of this union. As, by his own power and will, he took to himself our nature, so, in a like manner, he takes us into union with himself. This will be fully illustrated, in what follows; and is the great truth, which is set forth, realized and sealed in the Lord's supper, in which "the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood."† Hence the saying of Jesus, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John vi. 51. As the bread and wine enter into and assimilate with our bodies, so as to become part of them, so, in a spiritual manner, does Christ give us his flesh, and works in us a union with him, as real as the other, and far more intimate.

2. The agent of the union is the Holy Spirit, of whom Paul says, that "as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."—1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. . . . Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 27, 28. Hence, the ordinance of baptism, which by "the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ."‡

\* Shorter Catechism, Qu. 96.

† Ibid. Qu. 94.





One main reason why the Mediator must assume humanity, was, in order that his human nature might serve as a temple for the Holy Spirit. The idea of the Third Person of the Godhead dwelling in the divine nature of the Second, would be utterly irreconcilable with a several personality in them. But, when the Word was made flesh, in the very act of his incarnation, the Spirit was present, procreating, possessing and filling his whole humanity. Hence the words of the Baptist:—"The Father giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."—John iii. 34. Thus was the human nature of the Mediator made the temple of abode for the Holy Ghost,—the fountain whence alone he ever flows to men,—the medium through which only he is ever known, or his power felt, by men. It is in reference to this, that the Saviour says to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . . He spake of the temple of his body."—John ii. 19-21. For the same reason is the Holy Spirit, as the agent of the regeneration and sanctifying of believers, called the Spirit of Christ; and his habitual, controlling power, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." It is of the Spirit, thus dwelling in Christ's person and constituting his Spirit, that he speaks in his last address, promising to send him to abide with his people forever. He says, "I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."—John xvi. 7, 8. It is needless to dwell on the many scriptures which present this same view of the Spirit as Christ's Spirit, sent forth by him for the conviction and salvation of men. After his sufferings and resurrection, Jesus—to make known to his disciples how intimately related that promised Spirit was to his own person, and how closely they would be united to him by that Spirit—appeared to them in the upper room, and with the salutation of "Peace!" "he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."—John xx. 22. It is in fulfilment of these great and precious promises that the people of God are made "partakers of the

divine nature."—2 Pet. i. 4. Having ascended up, and assumed the throne, Christ pours, upon his elect, the Spirit from on high. (Isa. xxxii. 15; compare xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28, 29; Zech. xii. 10; Acts ii. 17, 18.) By it, baptized into Christ, they are one with him, and complete in him.

3. The union thus wrought is real, substantial, permanent, and most intimate. If that is a real union which incorporates the stones in the building, the branches in the vine, or the members in the body,—if that is real by which the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father,—then is this also real. If the blessed indwelling Spirit is a real subsistence,—his presence and his power real and infinite,—then is this, of which he is the bond, a union substantial and most intimate. It is more close than is any of which we have any knowledge or conception, only excepting that of the Persons of the Trinity, and the two natures of Christ. If that be an intimate union which, by virtue of material continuity, and community in life, blood and nervous fluid, identifies the members with the body, how much more intimate must this be, which is constituted by the person and agency of the almighty and omnipresent Spirit of God pervading and possessing every element of our being, and, in a like manner, dwelling in our glorious Head, as a uniting bond! "Though Christ be in heaven and we on earth, yet he can join our souls and bodies to his, at such a distance, without any substantial change of either, by the same infinite Spirit dwelling in him and us; and so our flesh will become his, when it is quickened by his Spirit, and his flesh ours, as truly as if we did eat his flesh and drink his blood; and he will be in us himself, by his Spirit, who is one with him, and who can unite more closely to Christ than any material substance can do; or, who can make a more close and intimate union between Christ and us. And it will not follow hence that a believer is one person with Christ, any more than that Christ is one person with the Father by that greater mystical union. Neither will a believer be hereby made God, but only the temple of God; as Christ's body and soul is; and the Spirit's lively instrument, rather than the principal cause. Neither will a believer be necessarily perfect





in holiness hereby; or Christ made a sinner: for Christ knoweth how to dwell in believers by certain measures and degrees, and to make them holy so far only as he dwelleth in them. And though this union seem too high a preferment for such unworthy creatures as we are, yet, considering the preciousness of the blood of God whereby we are redeemed, we should dishonour God if we should not expect a miraculous advancement to the highest dignity that creatures are capable of, through the merits of that blood.\*

4. The oneness of Christ and his people is mutual. So it is expressed by our Saviour:—"Ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 20. And so he illustrates it by his own union with the Father:—"As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one, in us."—John xvii. 21. He first united himself to our nature, as man; and then unites us to his own divine nature. Thus, by a double tie, are he and his people one. Each of these bonds, as we shall elsewhere see in detail, was essential to the whole office and work of the Son of God; and, together, they constitute a union more unfathomable in its amazing closeness and intimacy than in any thing else.

In yet another respect is this union mutual. As the Son of God unites us to himself, by imparting to us his Holy Spirit and engrafting us into his body; so, on the other hand, does he, by that indwelling and quickening Spirit, induce in his people an apprehension and embrace of him, as their Head and Lord, in actings of faith, love and all gracious affections.

5. A point here to be carefully noticed, is, that, in both aspects of this union, the Son of God is the Head of the body; and his people are but the dependant members. In uniting his divine nature with ours, he performed the work by his own almighty power. His omnipotence was the principle of efficiency, and the human nature which he assumed was the mere passive subject of his wonderful agency. So, in uniting his people to himself, he sends forth his Holy Spirit, and works his unsearchable grace in them, uniting them to himself. Thus, always, is he the Head. He is the efficient cause of all the influences which operate in

\* Marshall on Sanctification. Direction iii.

the members as such,—the controlling principle of every thing which belongs to or characterizes the body. Hence, he is, in no manner nor degree, defiled or infected by the corruption and depravity which were native to the members, whom he incorporates into his body. On the contrary, the influences flowing from him, the Head, pervading every member, work in them all conformity to his likeness, and purging from the old leaven. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, dwelling abundantly in him, and imparted freely and continually to them, is the fountain of their life, the spring and source of all their affections, and controlling principle of their actions.

The glorious person of the second Adam thus constitutes a power to bind together heaven and earth,—a power to lay hold of base and fallen man, to regenerate and exalt him, and to bear him up to the very throne and bosom of God. Nor need we wonder at the amazing results, when we observe the agencies which were engaged. That behooved to be a perfect work which was produced, when the Holy Trinity united in council and agency for the creation of Adam, the head of the human race, the primal image of God. What a result should we then anticipate, when eternal wisdom is expended, and the counsel is established by the eternal covenant of the Godhead, sealed by Jehovah's oath, to construct and endow a body for Him who dwelleth in the unapproachable light,—a body fitted to reveal abroad the Father's image as it dwells in the Son, in consummate clearness and perfection; and in which, as an appropriate and eternal temple, the blessed Spirit should forever dwell and exercise his power.

In the performance of such a work, whether we view it as having respect to his own individual person merely, or as including his body the church, each person of the Godhead is employed. When the Son says to the Father, "A body hast thou prepared me,"—Heb. x. 5,—the language applies, not only to that holy thing which was conceived of the virgin, but to that whole body which is composed of the redeemed, who were made by the Father's hand, given to the Son by the Father's love, and united to him by the Spirit of the Father, dwelling in all fulness in both. The Son both took to himself his personal



body, by an act of his own power, and unites to himself, by his own omnipotent will, all those whom the Father has given him, as members of his body and sharers of his glory. And the blessed Spirit of grace is alike the principle of his generation in the womb of the virgin, and of the regeneration, by which his body is builded up, through the accession of each chosen member, until the whole shall be complete.

Thus has it pleased the Father, that in Jesus should all fulness dwell. In him is all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, *§ 8. Thus, in him all fulness.* —the Father shining in him as his own perfect and express image,—the Son himself incarnate in the child of Mary,—and the Spirit, in all his measureless power and grace, making him his temple and abode. In him is all the fulness of man regenerate and saved. The whole company of the elect is complete in him, and constitutes the counterpart fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Nor does it need that he, as we must, should await the day of consummation to realize that fulness, and enjoy the perfection of his work,—the harmonious beauty of his perfected body. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever,"—Heb. xiii. 8,—he who could say, in the days of his flesh, "Before Abraham was, I am,"—John viii. 58,—can equally say, "Even to everlasting, I am." He is "the Alpha and Omega," who testifies:—"I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I *am* alive for evermore, Amen."—Rev. i. 17, 18. "His name shall be called The Father of Ages."—Isa. ix. 6. The present life which he possesses is eternity. The habitation in which he dwells is eternity. From his will and wisdom flow the fleeting periods of our passing days; but to him they bring no vicissitude. To him, therefore, the whole work of his grace is now as fully present as it will be when his saints shall see him in his beauty, in the land that is very far off. Before the foundations of the earth were laid, he rejoiced in its habitable parts, and delighted in the sons of men. And when the body shall at last be complete, and the topstone of the temple brought home to its place, it will only be the discovery, to the capacities of the creatures, of a work and a glory which has been forever

present, and realized in all its parts and proportions, in its progress and completion, by the incomprehensible and eternal Son of God.

To our dark and carnal apprehensions, it may seem strange and inconceivable that there should be any beauty or glory shed upon the person or character of Christ, by the assumption to himself of such a body as we have here described. But the very unfitness of the material only renders the more wonderful the result, and magnifies the honour of Him by whom it is wrought. No vision so glorious shall ever be witnessed by the hosts of heaven, as that revealed in the marriage of the Lamb. No personage so altogether lovely as the King in his beauty, and his queen all glorious within, and arrayed in gold of Ophir. No theme is so worthy of the highest strains of heaven's harps, as the wisdom and the condescension, the power and the grace, displayed by Immanuel, in espousing the daughter of Egypt, and making her worthy of his love. No revelation of the ineffable glories of God will compare to that which consists in the person and the work, the origin and the inheritance, of that mystical person, the Second Adam, and his body, the church.

In this discussion, we have looked upon the person of the Mediator chiefly in the light of our necessities, and his fitness to perform the work of salvation for us. But there is a higher point from which the whole subject is to be viewed. The plan of salvation is the most signal and crowning feature in the whole scheme for the revelation of God. In it are seen blending in harmonious beauty, and unfolding in boundless and inconceivable majesty and glory, the whole riches of the perfections of the blessed Three, the ineffable One. It has already appeared, that, by the eternal covenant, the Son was ordained the Revealer; and that the design of grace was formed, and the plan of grace devised, for the purpose of providing means for the revelation of God to the creatures. It belongs, therefore, to the prerogative of the Son, not only by nature, but by covenant, also, to be the Mediator,—and, as such, God-man,—through whom the salvation is bestowed on man; since that salvation constitutes the means of a display, so glorious, of the divine nature and perfec-





tions. In his own essential nature, he was the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person. But in this nature, he, the Revealer, is himself concealed. Although the Creator's glory was displayed in his works,—although the Father was discovered in the things which he made by the hands of the Son,—yet was the Son, in all this, as unsearchable as was the Father. He was the blessed and only Potentate, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see."—1 Tim. vi. 16. If the Shechinah declared his presence, it was as the Invisible; and it is only in the flesh that God is manifested,—seen of angels. He, thus, so perfect a likeness of the Father as to be absolutely one in essence and glory with him, condescends to render that glory visible by assuming the form and nature of a creature. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," says John, "and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."—John i. 14. He was made flesh by becoming one of that race who were in their creation ordained the image of God,—whose whole nature was constructed by the divine wisdom, not only as in itself a wonderful irradiation of God's glory, but with specific reference to the purposed incarnation of the Mediator, and incorporation of the elect in his body. And when the Son says to the Father, "A body hast thou prepared me," the declaration is not only true respecting the body of his flesh, as born of the virgin, but true as implying the council and decree by which Adam was created to have contemplated the providing of a fitting nature for the second Adam; by the assumption of which the Son might reveal, in otherwise unapproachable clearness, the mystery of God's glory. Thus, whilst the divine nature of the Son is the very outshining and counterpart of the Father's person, his human nature constituted the nearest likeness of God which creature could possess; and at the same time was the most fitting instrument, as head of his body the Church, for the disclosing of the divine perfections;—a glass through which the glory of the Highest pours its concentrated rays in a flood of radiance, which fills the universe with light, and all holy beings with adoring wonder, joy and praise.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW.

THE one word, obedience, expresses the whole work of Christ, in atoning for his people, and acquiring for them freedom from *§ 1. Christ's* sin and the curse, and a title to eternal life. It so expresses his work, moreover, as to show it to have been in fulfilment of the requirements of the law; which he obeyed, satisfying its claims, both penal and preceptive, in the terms which that law defined. He thus provided a righteousness whereby God may "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Rom. iii. 26.

In order to Christ's being held responsible to the law, for the accomplishment of his atoning work, it was necessary that he should freely and voluntarily place himself under its authority, in such manner that its claims should, without any arbitrary construction, but spontaneously and of right, come upon him; so that, not only should justice be entitled to make demand of him, but be bound to accept satisfaction at his hand. That Christ, even as to his mediatorial humanity, was not bound under the law, by any natural necessity, we have already seen. The absolute necessity of spontaneity in his sufferings is abundantly demonstrable. To imagine him to have unwillingly borne any part of those pangs with which he was afflicted, involves us in one of two conclusions. Either those sufferings were contrary to justice,—which is every way absurd and blasphemous; or, the soul of the Redeemer did not acquiesce in the demands of justice. In that case, his work, so far from atoning for the sins of others, would itself need atonement,—which it is blasphemy to imagine. To suppose him to have endured reluctantly any thing, is to attribute to the law an essential authority over



him, irrespective of his will. This is, to deny him to have humbled himself by obedience; since obedience was, in that case, due. It is, to deny him to have magnified the law and made it honourable; since that cannot be done by an obedience to which the law had a native right. Further, it would render his salvation altogether empty and futile; since such an authority of the law, being essential and irrespective of his consent, must be of perpetual obligation; and therefore can never be finally satisfied. In short, to question the entire and cordial acquiescence of the Mediator in bearing the curse, involves an impeachment of his fidelity to that eternal covenant under the terms of which he endured the cross. This is the argument to which he himself appeals:—"How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"—Matt. xxvi. 54. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke xxiv. 25, 26. The only necessity involved in the case, was the moral necessity,—if even that be not a misuse of language,—that the unchangeable Son of God should be unchangeably himself; that he who, with every condition, and the whole result, fully present to his eternal mind, had undertaken the work of salvation, should finish freely, what freely he began. "For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame."—Heb. xii. 2. That joy consisted, as we have formerly seen, in four things:—the salvation of his people, the overthrow and destruction of his enemies, the exaltation and glory of his mediatorial person, and, as the crown and end of all, the revelation and honour of the blessed Trinity. To imagine the Son of God to have been, in the slightest thought or deed, faithless to such objects as these, were a blasphemous contradiction in terms.

It is to be considered how Jesus assumed the place of his people at the tribunal of the law. For it was not enough that he should obey. His obedience must sustain such a relation to them as to be acceptable by justice on their account. It is not sufficient that he should suffer. He must meet and exhaust the very curse which was

§ 2. *How he came under the curse.*

launched against them. His position must be such that justice, in searching for the transgressors, shall find him in such a relation to them as to render him the party responsible to its curse for their sins. Here is no room for a mere arbitrary interposition. If the law do not find him responsible, it cannot be satisfied by any obedience he may perform, or suffering he may endure. Justice and truth must meet together, in the atoning work. Unless Christ occupied such a relation to the sins of his people that they may, in some proper sense, be called his sins, they cannot be imputed to him, nor punished in him. His position must be such that he shall be "numbered with the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 12. What has been presented, on the subject of the union of Christ and his people, suggests the solution, which the wisdom and love of God have devised, for the problem here suggested. It was not in his individual capacity, as a man, that Jesus stood at the tribunal;—but in that relation, a recognition of which we have seen to be essential to a complete conception of his person and position,—as head of that body the church, which Paul so remarkably represents as all comprehended in his name:—"As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ."—1 Cor. xii. 12. Inasmuch as he has condescended to become their head, he, in so doing, makes himself responsible for his members, at the bar of justice. So says Owen, "The principal foundation hereof is, that Christ and the church, in this design, were one mystical person, which state they do actually coalesce in, through the uniting efficacy of the Holy Spirit. He is the Head, and believers are the members of that one person; as the apostle declares, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. Hence, as what he did is imputed unto them, as if done by them, so what they deserved on the account of sin was charged upon him." "That our sins were transferred unto Christ, and made his; that thereon he underwent the punishment that was due unto us for them; and that the ground hereof, whereinto its equity is resolved, is the union between him and us," this eminent divine shows to have been the common faith of the church,





by appeal to many witnesses.\* The reason and propriety of the proceeding is obvious. The several and individual personality, which natively belonged to Christ's people, being, at the bar of justice, merged in that higher identity, by which they are members of his body, of one Spirit with him, and pervaded by one life, it follows of necessity that any responsibilities to which they may have been previously subject, are transferred to him their Head. This does not imply that there is any such confounding of identity, as that the sins of the members become, in the same sense, the sins of the Head; or, in any sense which would imply the infusion of the turpitude of sin into him who knew no sin. But, in uniting them to himself, Christ finds in his people sin, on account of which, they are not only infected with turpitude, but indebted to justice. By making them members of his person, he, by the power of his Spirit, purges the turpitude and destroys the sin; whilst, at the same time, he becomes responsible to the law for the penalty already incurred; and that, for the reason, that law and justice, in all cases, pass by the members, and hold the head responsible. Thus, a kingdom or sovereignty, which incorporates a foreign province into itself, in so doing, becomes responsible for any obligations previously incurred by the acquired territory; although it may not at all admit any intrinsic moral communion or participation in the facts by which those responsibilities were incurred. On the contrary, itself becomes the fountain of influence; and, thenceforth, both infuses its own intrinsic character into the new possession, and is of itself the exponent of the whole, in all external interests and relations.

The history of Christ's undertaking such a relation is beautifully stated by Boston:—"First, The Father designed a certain number of lost mankind, as it were, by name, to be the constituent members of that body chosen to life, of which body Christ was the designed Head; and he gave them to him for that end. Phil. iv. 3:—"My fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life." John xvii. 6:—"Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." These were a chosen company, whom sovereign

\* Owen on Justification, ch. viii. Board of Pub., p. 198.

free grace picked out from among the rest of mankind, on a purpose of love, and gave to the second Adam for a seed. On which account they are said to have been 'chosen in him,'—Eph. i. 4; being, in the decree of election, laid upon him as the foundation stone, to be built upon him, and 'obtain salvation by him.'—1 Thess. v. 9. Which decree, as it relates to the members elect, is therefore called 'The Book of Life;' being, as it were, the roll which the Father gave to the second Adam, the Head elect, containing the names of these designed to be his seed, to receive life by him.

"Now, our Lord Jesus, standing as second Adam, Head of the election, to wit: such as sovereign pleasure should pitch upon to be vessels of mercy, did accept of the gift of the particular persons elected or chosen by his Father. John xvii. 6:—"Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Verse 10:—"And thine are mine." Like as the first Adam, in the making of the first covenant, stood alone, without actual issue; yet had destined for him a numerous issue, to be comprehended with him in that covenant, to wit; all mankind; the which, Adam did at least virtually accept; so, a certain number of lost mankind being elected to life, God, as their original proprietor, gave them to Christ, the appointed Head, to be his members, and comprehended with him in the second covenant, though as yet none of them were in being; and he accepted of the gift of them, being well pleased to take them in particular for his body mystical, for which he should covenant with his Father. And in token thereof, he, as it were, received and kept as his own the Book of Life containing their names, which is therefore called 'The Lamb's book of Life.'—Rev. xxi. 27."\*

This acceptance of the elect, by the Mediator, was not only an acceptance of them as vessels of honour to him and stars in his crown; but, as they were bound under the curse and held in the power of sin. If he take them as his, it must be with the encumbrance of their burdens, the responsibility of their sins. Before he can place them as partners on his throne, or set them as jewels in his diadem, he must satisfy the lien that was upon them at

\* Boston on the Covenant of Grace. Head ii.





the bar of God's justice, and free them from the bondage of depravity in which they were held. This the Son of God undertook. Making them one with himself, he, by this means, acquired a right to answer to their names; and, being thus found, by justice, in their place at the bar, and not only claiming them as his own, but showing them to be, in fact, members of his own body, it only remained that justice enforce its demand against this glorious Surety, who thus exalts its dignity and honours its claims by humbling himself to answer at its tribunal.

In order to the effect of the economy thus described, it was a matter entirely unimportant that the elect were as yet not all actually in Christ. As already mentioned, the entire transaction was between parties to whom the transition and change of time, and vanishing scenes and circumstance, are unknown. The eternal Judge, at whose tribunal the Head of the elect appeared to answer, saw in him, from everlasting, all those whom he will at length receive into union with himself; and for them, as thus in him, he transacted, as well in the eternal covenant itself, as in the days of his flesh, whilst bearing for them the curse. That it was for the elect, as thus related to Christ,—as being the members of his body,—that he undertook and endured the curse, the testimony of the Scriptures is abundant and unequivocal. Thus, Paul says that "Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body;" and that he "loved the church, and gave himself for it, . . . for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones."—Eph. v. 23-30. He represents Christ's afflictions as borne "for his body's sake, the church."—Col. i. 24. To the same effect are those numerous places which represent the people of God to have communion in Christ's atoning work, by virtue of membership in him. Thus, Rom. vi. 3-8, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together with him, (*σὺμφυτοὶ γεγόναμεν*, if we have a common growth with him, as the graft

has with the stock,) in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, (*συνεσταυρώθη*, is crucified.) . . . Now if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him." Again, he tells the Corinthians, that "if one died for all, then (*οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον*) all are dead,"—2 Cor. v. 14; and, to the Galatians, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."—Gal. ii. 20. In the epistle to the Colossians we have another remarkable passage to our present purpose,—Col. ii. 6-20:—"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith. . . . For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. . . . Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" We might multiply citations to the same effect. In these places, the fundamental principle of the apostle's doctrine is, that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,—the body of Christ,"—1 Cor. xii. 13, 27; that "as many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."—Gal. iii. 27. By virtue of this baptism engrafting us into Christ, we are one with him, and have communion in all that he did in making atonement for us. We are circumcised with him; we are crucified with him; we died and were buried with him; with him we are quickened and rise, and with him take possession of eternal life. It was not he whom, on the cross, God's justice assailed. But the old man which was in his members



was pierced by the nails which entered his hands and feet; and whilst, by Roman hands, the superscription appropriate to him individually was written,—“THE KING OF THE JEWS,”—God’s justice affixed, as the charge under which he was condemned, and ground of his death, “the handwriting that was against us.” That inscription reads, “THE SIN OF THE WORLD.” But, if it be so, that our sins were nailed to the cross, and we died in Christ’s death because we are members of Christ in his dying, as all these places testify, and if it be true that our sins, thus laid upon him, were the only cause of his death, it follows, as an equivalent proposition, that he was accused of our sins, and died for them, as being the sins of those who were in him,—his members; for which, as such, he was, therefore, responsible:—“The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,”—Isa. liii. 6; not by an arbitrary transfer; but by the bestowal of us upon him, and our engrafting in him as his members. The same doctrine is expressed by Isaiah in another figure:—“He shall see his seed. . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.”—Isa. liii. 10, 11. His atoning sorrows were the birth-pangs endured for his people as his seed,—as the very fruit of his own body.

This doctrine is very strikingly and tenderly set forth in the Lord’s supper:—“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.”—1 Cor. x. 16, 17. Because, by faith, we, in partaking of the bread, receive Christ himself, we are one body with that crucified one, of whom the broken bread is the sacrament; one with him in his crucifixion, and he one with us, and, therefore, for our sins crucified.

We have entirely disregarded the interpretation, which supposes some of the passages quoted above to have respect to the form of baptism; as though resembling a burial. This interpretation is inconsistent with the mode of Christ’s sepulture; with the scope of the passages, the analogy of the other places quoted, and the scriptural meaning and design of the ordinance of baptism; which is the sign and seal of the outpouring of the Spirit,

by which we are united to Christ. (See Acts i. 5, and ii. 2–4, 17, 18. Compare 1 Cor. xii. 13, 27; Gal. iii. 27.) In fact, the interpretation to which we allude would seem to have been invented, for the purpose of mocking the people of Christ with husks, whilst the bread of heaven is withheld. By it, the precious meaning of the baptism into Christ is utterly lost.

The point next demanding attention is, the nature and extent of that obedience which, in the capacity thus assumed, the Son of God rendered to the law. According to the testimony of Paul, he was “made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.”—Gal. iv. 4, 5. In this language, the phrase “under the law,” as applied to Christ’s people, comprehends, it must be evident, the whole extent of their responsibility at the bar of justice, under the provisions of law. To this, the apostle appeals, as the reason and measure of Christ’s subordination. It cannot be questioned, that the phrase, “under the law,” as applied severally to Christ and to his people, has precisely the same dimension. Because they were held in the bonds of the law, he submitted himself to those bonds, that they might have release. Whatever, therefore, was implied in the fact that they were under the law, whether of obligation to its precept or of responsibility to its curse, is equally implied in his being under it. He assumed all their debts, in order to gain them for himself. The same idea is conveyed, in the statement, that “being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient, until death.”—Phil. ii. 8. Here, his position as being in the attitude or condition of a man, that is, “in the form or nature of a servant” to the law, as the preceding verse describes him, is stated, as the ground upon which he was held to obedience, in his life, and to death at last. His obedience, then, was the obedience of a man,—such as was due from man, whom he came to save.

That the righteousness, which Christ wrought, on behalf of his people, was a full satisfaction to the law, in its own terms, is demonstrated by the fact that he himself made the law the rule and standard of his action, both in respect to his obedience and sufferings. What he did, was what the law required; and what





he submitted to endure, was what the law imposed. Thus, in respect to his entire mission and work, he says, in the fortieth Psalm, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."—Psalm xl. 7, 8. Here, he declares the purpose of his coming to earth to be, the doing of God's will; of which, he recognises the law, as the exponent. So, when about to enter on his ministry, he applied to John to be admitted to that baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, which John preached. Certainly, so far as he individually was concerned, he needed no such baptism. He knew no sin. And, so viewing the matter, John exclaims, "I have need to be baptized of thee; and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."—Matt. iii. 14, 15. Thus does he declare it to be requisite to that righteousness, which he came to work, not only to comply with the ordinary routine of the Mosaic ritual, but to perform such special acts of observance as were due from a believing Israelite. Again, in the sermon on the Mount, he says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—Matt. v. 17, 18. And, lest any should cavil as to the meaning of the phraseology employed, respecting the law and the prophets, he immediately adds, "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."—vs. 19, 20. From this text, he proceeds at large to expound the spirituality of the law of God, as contrasted with the ceremonial observances of the Pharisees. Of them, he says, in another place, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law,

judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."—Matt. xxiii. 23. Such, then, is Christ's own statement of the nature and extent of that law which he came to fulfil. It was the law of God, as made known to Israel, including all its burdensome observances, and all its spiritual precepts. In him, every jot and tittle is fulfilled. To fulfil all, he came.

The arguments already presented, cover, in fact, Christ's obedience to the curse of the law, as much as to the precept; since *§ 5. He bore the curse.* the latter is an essential part of the law, as well as the other. Of the many testimonies of the Scriptures which expressly assert Christ's sufferings to have been prescribed by the law, we will cite a few examples. In the epistle to the Galatians, Paul, having recited the penal sanction of the law,—“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them,”—then states that “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse (*ὁπὲρ ἡμῶν*) in place of us.”—Gal. iii. 13. Here, that of which the apostle speaks is clearly defined. It is that legal curse of which he says, “As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, cursed is every one,” &c. It is that curse, under which, by nature, and by transgression, Christ's people lay. Of it Paul says, that “he hath redeemed us from it.” The means of our redemption, he states. The Redeemer hath been “made a curse for us,”—in our stead. That, therefore, which Christ bore was the penalty of the law due to our sins. The law denounced a curse. He endured it. That such was the nature of his sufferings, moreover, Paul shows to have been ceremonially intimated by that overruling Providence, according to which Jesus expired on the cross. By the Mosaic law, he who was hanged on a tree was held to be accursed, as being rejected from off the earth, and devoted to the wrath of heaven. The design of this provision is seen in the Son of God, thus proclaimed to earth and heaven to be a curse for the sins of men. The language here used to express the burden which was laid upon the Redeemer, is the strongest and most forcible which it is possible to employ for the



purpose of representing the whole boundless tide of God's infinite indignation. In the Old Testament, it is the habitual expression for the climax of exhausted patience and outpouring wrath. "Therefore," says Jeremiah, "is your land a desolation, and an astonishment and a curse, without an inhabitant."—Jer. xlv. 22. "I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes."—Jer. xlix. 13. No Scripture usage is more fixed and determinate than that by which the phrase, "to make a curse," is defined to mean, the infliction, on the subject, of God's ultimate and unmitigated wrath.

To the same conclusion which we have already attained respecting the legal nature of Christ's sufferings, are we compelled, by all those scriptures which speak of him as suffering "for," or, "instead of," us. Our stand was under the law's curse. If he really suffered in our place, he suffered what was due from us. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. . . . The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . For the transgression of my people was he stricken. . . . Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. . . . He hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 5-12. "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give (*ἐπέφ*) in stead of the life of the world."—John vi. 51. "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."—1 Cor. xv. 3. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."—1 Peter ii. 24. But it is needless to multiply citations on this point, respecting which the Scriptures are so full. One additional place will be enough, with the remarks upon it of a writer who certainly is not open to the charge of prejudice in favour of the doctrine. Says Mr. Barnes, "One of the words which properly denote *in place of*, or *in stead of*, in the sense of substitution, is the Greek *ἀντὶ* (*anti*). That this word denotes *substitution*, or, *in the place of*, is apparent from these passages:—Matt. ii. 22:—'*In the room (ἀντὶ)* of his father Herod.' Matt. v. 38:—'*An eye for (ἀντὶ)* an

eye, and a tooth *for (ἀντὶ)* a tooth.' Luke xi. 11:—'*If he ask a fish, will he for (ἀντὶ)* a fish give him a serpent?' James iv. 15:—'*For (ἀντὶ)* that,' that is, *instead of* that, 'ye ought to say.' Yet this word is used by the Redeemer in explaining the object for which he came into the world,—Matt. xx. 28:—'*Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for (ἀντὶ)* many;' that is, his life was a ransom, (*λύτρον*), *in the place of the many*. There is no word in the Greek language which would more naturally convey the idea of a substitution than this. There is none which a writer, *intending* to express the thought that one did any thing in the place of another, would more naturally employ." After similar criticism upon the word, *ὕπερ*, and many citations illustrating its use to express the substitution of Christ at the bar of justice in the room of his people, Mr. Barnes proceeds to say:—

"These passages undoubtedly express the idea of substitution. The language is such as a Greek would use if he *wished* to convey that idea. He could find no better terms in his own copious language to express that thought; and, if this language does *not* convey the idea, then it is impossible to express so plain a thought in human language. Those who believe the doctrine of substitution, or the doctrine that Christ died in the place of sinners, have no plainer words by which to express their belief than those which are employed in these passages of the New Testament; and why should it not be supposed that language in the Bible equally explicit and apparently unambiguous,—language which men now themselves employ as best adapted to convey their meaning,—should express, as it seems to, the same idea? Is it impossible for God to convey so plain a thought to mankind as that He whom he sent into the world died as a *substitute* for sinners, or that his death was in their stead? And, if he meant to do this, could even he find human language which would convey the doctrine more clearly? And *would* he employ language commonly used to denote the idea of substitution, unless that was the true doctrine?"\*

\* Barnes on the Atonement, pp. 284, 287.





The argument thus presented is sound and conclusive. No ingenuity can evade the conclusion that Christ suffered and died, in the place of his people, at the bar of justice. *§ 6. Mr. Barnes' doctrine.* Perhaps the reader imagines this to be the doctrine of the writer here quoted. But such is not the case. After having asserted and demonstrated the doctrine, he proceeds at once to cut it up by the roots; retaining, indeed, the name, but utterly destroying the thing. "The third point," says Mr. B., "necessary to be established, is, that the sufferings of the Redeemer were *substituted sufferings*, or that they were not *the real and literal penalty of the law*. This differs from the point which has just been considered. That was, that *he himself* was a substitute, or that he took the place of sinners, and died in their stead; that is, it was not the person who had violated the law who suffered, but another in his place. The point now to be established is, that the *sufferings themselves* were *substituted sufferings*, or that they were not the real and literal penalty of the law, but were *in the place* of that penalty, and were designed to answer the same end."\*

In the position thus stated by Mr. Barnes, and the arguments by which he attempts to establish it, the very essence of the atonement is at stake. It demands, therefore, deliberate consideration. The first point to be noticed is, that this doctrine is formally contradictory to that just before established. He has just proved, by the abundant and unequivocal testimony of the Scriptures, that Christ stood in our place,—that he was our substitute at the bar, and suffered and died in our stead. "He whom God sent into the world died as a substitute for sinners, . . . his death was in their stead."† "In securing this reconciliation, Christ was properly a substitute in the place of sinners. A substitute is 'one person put in the place of another, to answer the same purpose.'—*Webster*. The idea is, that the person substituted is to do or suffer the same thing which the person for whom he is substituted would have done."‡ Such is the doctrine of the Bible, as set forth by our author, himself. But, to come into our place,—to stand in our stead,—to be a substitute

\* Barnes on the Atonement, p. 288.

† Ibid. 287.

‡ Ibid. p. 281.

for us, does not mean, to fill a place different from that which we occupied. Our place was at the bar of the law, condemned by its justice, and doomed under its curse. If Christ came into our place, that must have been the place which he filled,—at the bar, under the curse. And, that such was his position, we have seen the Scriptures to assert, in detail. Mr. Barnes' system is, indeed, one of substitution; not that substitution which the Scriptures proclaim,—that of Christ in the place of sinners; but, of another system, instead of that in which God's law and justice preside. An illustration which is cited by Mr. Barnes will assist to make this plain. "A nation is threatened with invasion. The inhabitants of a certain district are assembled, and a draft is made of a certain proportion, to constitute a military force to repel the invader. When one is drawn to serve in the army, instead of going himself, he is permitted to employ, at his own expense, another, who shall be equally able-bodied, and equally skilled in the art of war. He who is thus voluntarily substituted, in the place of him that was drafted to perform the service, goes forth in his stead, to do what he was to do, to suffer what he would have suffered, to encounter the danger which he would have encountered."\* A substitute, then, Mr. Barnes being witness, is one who fills the very place of him in whose stead he stands;—he must perform his very duties, and bear his responsibilities. Should a drafted man propose to furnish a substitute, but upon inquiry it should appear that, instead of serving in his place, the substitute was expected to have exemption from military duty, in consideration of the performance of some civil service, all would see the absurdity of using the word in such a way,—of calling this a substitution.

In the defence of the country, a different mode may be adopted, instead of that at first proposed. An organization of volunteers may be substituted for the forced draft; or, a levy *en masse* instead of a partial draft. Thus, one system may be substituted for another; provided it is designed to accomplish the same object. And it is perfectly legitimate, in opposers of our doctrine, to attempt, if they can, to show, that, instead of satisfac-

\* Barnes on the Atonement, p. 281.





tion to the violated law, God has devised and carried into effect some other system for the salvation of man. But it is not legitimate, nor justifiable, to pretend to hold Christ to have been our substitute in the suffering of death; and at the same time deny him to have endured the very penalty which the law denounced against us. It is one thing, to substitute a surety instead of the sinner, condemned at the bar of justice, by the sentence of the law. It is another, to remove that tribunal, set aside the provisions of the law, and substitute something else in their stead. It is only by the strictness of the law that the sinner is condemned. By its rule he is found a transgressor. By virtue of its indefeasible authority, and by that alone, is he subjected to responsibility, and needs salvation. If the law be set aside,—with it, the sentence of condemnation passes away; and the sinner needs no saviour. The very suggestion of a substitute, involves the supposition of an accusation and sentence pending against the party;—it implies the surviving power of the law, and sovereignty of its decree;—it supposes an account unsatisfied at its bar, and responsibilities there to be met and cancelled. The doctrine of the substitution of Christ in our stead, is, thus, irreconcilably inconsistent with the idea that he did not endure the very penalty of the law, but something else, in its stead. If that which he bore was not the very thing prescribed by the law, it neither could be known to the law, nor due from us. The law, therefore, would not demand it; nor justice enforce it; neither on us nor on our surety.

Furthermore, the doctrine of the Scriptures is, not merely in general terms, that the Redeemer was our substitute; but, as we have sufficiently seen, the testimony is specific and in detail,

§ 7. *Christ bore the very penalty.* that, whatever was due from us to the law, that he satisfied. If we were under the law,—he was “made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.”—Gal. iv. 4. If obedience to every precept was due from us,—he obeyed all, as it became him “to fulfil all righteousness.”—Matt. iii. 15. If perfect and perpetual obedience was due on our part,—he was “obedient until death.”—Phil. ii. 8. If our lives were forfeited,—he “gave his life a ransom for many.”—

Matt. xx. 28. If “the wages of sin is death,”—“while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”—Rom. v. 8. If the sentence of the law against us was a curse,—“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.”—Gal. iii. 13. In short, his own testimony seals the whole case:—“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”—Matt. v. 17, 18.

Whilst in the very act of attempting to explain away the testimony of the Scriptures on this subject, Mr. Barnes is forced to admit, in the clearest terms, the very truth which he repudiates. Respecting the language of Paul in Galatians iii. 13, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;” he says, “The word here used, and rendered *curse*,—*κατάρα*,—means, properly, as with us, cursing, malediction, execration, a devoting or dooming to destruction. It occurs in the New Testament in the following places:—Col. iii. 10, 13, rendered, curse; Heb. vi. 8, James iii. 10, rendered, cursing; and 2 Pet. ii. 14, rendered, cursed. It conveys the idea of being given over to destruction, or left without those influences which would protect and save,—as, a land that is given over to the curse of sterility or barrenness. Applied to a lost sinner, it would mean that all saving influences were withdrawn, and that he was given over to the malediction of God. But what is its meaning as applied to the Redeemer in the passage now before us?” After enumerating six statements which he rejects, he proceeds:—“There is but one other conceivable meaning that can be attached to the passage; and that is, that, though innocent, he was treated in his death as if he had been guilty; that is, he was put to death as if he had personally deserved it.”\* Such, then, is the meaning of Paul, Mr. Barnes himself being witness. And, now, we ask, What is that which he suffers, who, at the tribunal of the law, is found “guilty,”—he who is proved to be personally deserving to die? Is it an infliction which the law does not prescribe, and

\* Barnes, p. 294.



of which, therefore, it can have no cognizance? Or is it that which the law finds, in its record, inscribed as the reward of transgression,—the very penalty of the law? It is impossible that this question should be candidly answered in any but one way. That which sin deserves,—that which the curse involved and the law inflicts,—is, and can be, nothing else than the law's penalty. And it the Son of God endured, when he became a curse; so taking away from us the curse of the law.

Mr. Barnes does not pretend to adduce a passage of Scripture as denying Christ to have borne the penalty of the law. This fact is the more significant in the presence of the abundant evidence which he cites in proof that he came into our place,—that he was a substitute for us. Our place, certainly, was at the bar of the law, under sentence of condemnation to its penalty.

The argument upon which this writer relies, in default of Scripture testimony, consists in the assumption that remorse and eternal misery are essential elements of the penalty. These, Christ did not realize: therefore, he did not suffer the penalty. But the major premise is false, and the conclusion therefore fails. The penalty of the law is such evil as it prescribes, to be inflicted at its tribunal, for the vindication of its sovereignty against transgressors. And the question now before us is,—whether Christ satisfied the law by enduring all which it prescribed as the punishment of sin. That such was the fact, we have seen the Scriptures to be very clear. And this is, in fact, admitted by Mr. Barnes, with however much reluctance; when, despairing to find any unsatisfied provision in the law itself, he has recourse to observation, as to what evils actually follow, in the providence of God, upon the commission of sin. All these, he assumes to be parts of the law's penalty. And since among these he finds remorse and eternal misery, he hence concludes that Christ has not fulfilled all. But the penalty of a law is to be learned no otherwise than by its own terms, as recorded in the law. In all cases, the rule is one; the test, one. "What saith the law? How readest thou?" And that which is not inscribed in the statute is to be left altogether out of the ac-

count, in reference to the tribunal of the law and the decrees of justice. An example will illustrate the fallacy of Mr. Barnes' appeal. Two men are arraigned at the bar of the country, upon the same criminal charge. They are found guilty, and both sentenced to a like penalty,—to serve an equal term in prison. One of these has a prosperous business, which is ruined, a large circle of friends, who are alienated, and a loving family, which is stricken by the shame of his condemnation. The other has no such calamities to encounter. His property is safely invested, beyond the reach of calamity; his family and friends live at a distance, and are ignorant of his dishonour and shame. Who does not instantly see that the extent of the evil endured in these cases is altogether disproportionate, although the penalty of the law is precisely the same? In short, as we have elsewhere seen, the consequences which result from sin are derived only in part from the penalty of the law. They result, partly, from the nature of sin itself; and partly, from the character and condition of the sinner. Neither remorse nor eternity of sorrow are of the essence of the penalty. Remorse is that sense of desert which results from an apprehension of the excellence of holiness and evil of sin, and consciousness of voluntary aversion to that excellence and embrace of that evil. It is not an evil prescribed by the law; but arises from the very excellence of the moral nature in which the sinner is clothed, and the evil of the sin which he has embraced. It is not inflicted by God the Judge, but grows out of the constitution which was made by God the Creator. And, although it recognises, it does not vindicate, the sovereignty of the law. It proclaims it violated, but makes no satisfaction for the breach. Thus, wanting in every element of the legal penalty, it is no part of it.

So, eternity of suffering is altogether unessential to the penalty of the law, and dependent upon the nature and condition of the victim. A finite being cannot exhaust an infinite curse, and, hence, must remain forever under it; and a sinning creature must continually incur new condemnation, by reason of continual sin. From both these causes, it results that the curse, as inflicted





upon finite sinners, involves them in eternal woe. But, when the infinite sinless One bore the curse, a few brief hours of conflict exhausted its power, and proclaimed death abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

It may be asserted that the sufferings of Christ were enforced by the law, and honouring to it, because they were involved as elements in the proper penalty, although not exhaustive of it. The penalty of the law was a curse, included in which is dissolution of the body. Such a death of the body he experienced: therefore, his sufferings were not something else than the very penalty, but a part of it. But the fallacy of such reasoning is obvious. Either the law retains its sovereign authority in unimpaired integrity, or it does not. If it retain the throne of judgment and the sceptre of power, its decrees, as enforced, must involve the very infliction which their own letter prescribes, alike in kind and extent. To deny this, is to assert that some power superior to the law has assumed the throne, by the interposition of which the letter of the law is modified or set aside. But any infliction resulting from such an interposition is to be attributed, not to the law, but to the interposing power; and however, in terms, it may correspond with provisions which are contained in the law, such an infliction, so far from deriving authority from the law, or conferring honour upon it, constitutes a signal proclamation of the dethroning of the law, and the prostration of its honour in the dust. If the law have the power, it will enforce its own terms; if it have not power adequate to this, it is a mere deception to attribute any other provisions to it, or to imagine it satisfied with any thing else. It is a "royal law," claiming always the throne; and, if refused the absolute mastery, is incapable of assuming any subordinate place. Either it must reign or perish.

Before passing from this point, we cannot but emphasize the fact that, Mr. Barnes himself being the judge, there is absolutely nothing found in the letter of the law, whether preceptive or penal, to which opposers can point, and say, "Christ did not fulfil this." In order to derogate from the perfection of his work and the completeness of his righteousness, they are con-

strained to appeal to forms of evil, which, confessedly, are not specified in the law. But with these we have no concern. If the Son of God has satisfied all the provisions which are found in the law itself, we are satisfied to leave the other evils—remorse and eternal misery—to be disposed of by those in whose system they constitute features so important. If these are all that can be objected, then is the law, as defined in its own terms, fully satisfied; its whole precept has been fully obeyed; its whole penalty endured; its dishonoured crown restored, and its perfection signally displayed.

The fact that Christ was under the curse of the law is patent on the face of his whole history. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He suffered the persecutions of men, the malice of hell, and the frown of God. If these things flowed not from the penal sanction of the law, whence did they come? Is there any other fountain of sorrow and woe beside its curse? Is it possible for the frown of God to be realized any otherwise than in conformity with the decrees of justice? Then is justice itself dethroned, and the glorious rectitude of the Holy One enshrouded in impenetrable darkness. Then cannot the fullest consciousness of perfect integrity, and unwavering fidelity and obedience, assure any creature of the favour of his Maker. Either the Mediator bore the curse for the sins of his people,—either his sufferings were enforced by law and justice, or in violation of them; but, if the latter, then is God's whole administration overshadowed with a pall of utter night, and the creatures must gaze upon the awful throne of the Almighty with mingled emotions of distrust, and terror, and utter despair, uncertain where or why the indiscriminating stroke of woe will next descend!

A glance at the several elements in which the atoning work of Christ consisted, will serve to illustrate the completeness of his satisfaction to the claims of the law. As to his active obedience, the case is soon stated. By the especial ordering of God's providence, he was subject to the authority of three distinct tribunals, at each of which he was tried and justified. He was a subject of the civil law of Rome, as administered by Pilate and Herod; and, in the judg-

§ 8. Particulars of his humiliation.



ment-hall, Pilate testified, to the Jews, that he was free from all just charge of crime:—"Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him; no, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him."—Luke *xxiii.* 14, 15. And, when his expostulations only excited tumult, "he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; (*ὁμῆτις ὀφεισθε*), bear ye witness."—Matt. *xxvii.* 24. Thus emphatically did the civil magistrate attest his righteousness.

He was subject to the Mosaic law, as dispensed by the great council of Israel, which "sat in Moses' seat." Before that tribunal he was called; and, with the zeal of unscrupulous malignity, inquest was made, for some charge which even perjury could establish. "The chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death, and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."—Mark *xiv.* 55, 56. In the whole course of his ministry, his enemies the scribes and priests did not pretend to make a charge of violating any law but their unscriptural traditions. And when thus tried before the sanhedrim, they are at last compelled, in despair, to abandon the attempt to prove any thing against him; and, out of his own mouth, convict him of blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God. Thus did the very malignity of his accusers serve to attest the spotless righteousness of him who, having come not to destroy the law of Moses, but to fulfil it, was faithful until death.

Jesus was subject to the moral law, at the tribunal of God, the omniscient and righteous Judge. And, of his perfect conformity to it, he had testimony as signal as in either of the other cases. After he had spent thirty years, in fulfilment of the duties of a son, a brother, and a citizen in private life, he had the attestation of a voice from heaven. At his baptism, not only did the Spirit openly appear in the form of a dove which descended upon him, but "a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased."—Luke *iii.* 22. Again,

when his ministry was nearly closed, in the mount of transfiguration he received a similar attestation. To this, his perfect conformity to the law of God, the Father also bore witness, in that he raised him from the dead.

In respect to the particulars of the curse, which was laid upon the Mediator, the evidence is equally clear. If the curse involved a forfeiture of all right to possessions on earth,—extremest poverty was his portion, from the cradle to the cross. Cradled in the manger of the public inn,—realizing through life a destitution respecting which he says, "The foxes have holes; and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head,"—Matt. *viii.* 20,—he was indebted, for the very sepulchre in which he lay, to the charity of Joseph of Arimathea. If sorrow and toil were comprehended in the sentence pronounced on our first parents, toil and sorrow were the unvarying portion of the Son of Mary. In the labours of his trade, the carpenter of Nazareth earned his bread by the sweat of his brow; and in the weariness of his toilsome ministry he filled the measure of that portion of the curse; whilst, always, he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."—Isa. *liii.* 3. Grief in the sorrows of others; grief from the bereavements of death; grief from beholding the wickedness of the wicked, and from a true apprehension of the fearfulness of their doom; grief in anticipation and experience of the unfaithfulness and desertion of his cherished friends, and the treason of one who ate at his table; grief caused by the unrelenting hate and untiring persecution which pursued him from the cradle to the grave, urged by those in pity for whom he bore it all:—these were some of the elements of the mingled cup of bitterness which was drained by the incarnate Son of God. In short, if the sentence of justice abandons the sinner to the power of Satan, whom he has chosen rather than God,—if it condemns him to death,—if it denounces against him the very frown, the wrath and curse, of God himself:—all these Jesus endured. Borne to the wilderness, and exhausted by a fast of forty days, he is left to contend with all the wiles of the adversary. Again, in the "hour and power of darkness," he is called to wrestle in the garden, with





the assaults of the malignant foe of God and man. In that same hour, his cry of agony, and his gushing blood, bedewing his person, attest his experience of the burden of omnipotent wrath:—"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Matt. xxvi. 39. On the cross, we have the most unequivocal testimony, that in addition to all, beside, which he endured,—the agony of crucifixion,—the malignant scoffs of his enemies,—the mockings of devils,—the desertion of his friends,—he was called to realize the frown of his Father,—the wrath of the Almighty. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And when he cried, "It is finished," and yielded himself into the hands of death—the executioner, commissioned by the law;—when he was borne to the sepulchre, we see consummate, and signalized to the observation of every creature, the fact that he bore the curse and paid our debt, to the uttermost farthing.

In respect to the assaults of Satan, as endured by the Son of God, there are some points which demand special attention. In submitting himself to them, Jesus sustained several relations, which are to be discriminated from each other. (1.) He was the vicarious substitute, to atone for the sins of the world, to the justice of God; and, as such, exposed to this, as an element in the curse. (2.) He was a party in covenant with God, to the fulfilment of a perfect righteousness. And, as the first Adam must meet the temptations of Satan, in order to experiment and demonstration of his unwavering faithfulness to the terms of the covenant which was made with him, so must the second Adam give equal proof of fidelity to his engagements. (3.) He was God's chosen champion; ordained to avenge the cause of God, on man's behalf, against the enemy of God and seducer of man. This latter conception of the office and work of Christ is comprehensive of both the others; and in it, accordingly, he was announced in the original threatening against the serpent, and promise to the fallen pair:—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 15. The fulfilment

§ 9. His connections with Satan.

of this primeval promise comprehends the entire work of the Son of God. Looking at it as having respect to his immediate relations to Satan, it involves three points. These are,—the submission of himself, unseduced, to all the arts of Satan's temptations; the exposure of his person to the malice of the enemy, and victory over it all, through the triumph of a complete and untarnished righteousness; and the acquisition and exercise, by him, as man, of a right to employ the power of his divinity, in the rescue of his people from the bondage of Satan, and in the overthrow and utter destruction of the enemy. That right was acquired by him through the fulfilment of the righteousness of the covenant under which he performed his ministry on earth.

As illustrative of the general principles here stated, there are some very remarkable facts in the sacred record. Our first parents were seduced severally alone. So was Jesus required to meet the tempter, alone, in the solitude of the wilderness, and in the midnight seclusion and silence of the garden. The seductions by which the serpent triumphed over our frail mother were three,—sensual pleasure, proposed in the attractive fruit of the forbidden tree; distrust in God's truth and goodness; and an unhallowed ambition,—“Ye shall be as gods.” The same are the weapons by which the arch-adversary hopes to overcome the woman's Seed. Armed with the skill of four thousand years' experience of the human heart,—confident in arts which had never known defeat in leading men astray,—and actuated by pride and fear and intensest hate, as he knows, in Him of Nazareth, the Seed whose coming he had learned so long to dread,—the tempter comes to Jesus, enfeebled and faint with a fast of forty days. He proposes to him, not the indulgence of unlawful appetites, but the supply of those that were lawful:—"If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."—Matt. iv. 3. But it is the fruit of the forbidden tree. God's power had borne him to that solitude; and his will had imposed the fast. And the miraculous powers of the Son of man were his, not for the gratification of his own appetites, nor for the satisfaction of Satan's demands, but for the Father's





glory. To have assented would have been to cast off the cross; and Jesus replies, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The next attempt is to induce distrust in God. "He taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." To make gratuitous experiment of God's faithfulness, is to distrust it. "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." The previous approaches of Satan were covert. But, despairing of success in that form, the devil now casts off disguise, announces himself, and appeals to the ambition of the carpenter's son, by holding up before him the glittering prize of wealth and dominion. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Jesus had of his own will submitted to the assaults of the tempter. He now asserts his authority over him. The words, "Get thee hence, Satan," were imperative; and the devil "departed from him (*ἄρρηκτο*) until the time."—Luke iv. 13. The authority of the injunction thus imposed was effectual throughout the entire ministry of Christ; during the whole of which his control was asserted, in the most imperative form, over all the power of the enemy.

When the time drew nigh that the mediatorial obedience should be finished, Satan was permitted again to assail the Son of man, and to engage with him in a final struggle.

He had not been prevented at any time from indulging in machinations against the Redeemer. Two of the evangelists, Luke and John, state distinctly his agency in the treachery of Judas. He seems first to have proposed the treason to the son of perdition, upon occasion of the feast at the house of Simon

the leper, three days before the crucifixion. A woman having anointed Jesus with a precious ointment, the avarice of Judas impelled him to a hypocritical expression of indignation at the waste of what might better have been given to the poor,—"not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."—John xii. 6. He was thereupon rebuked by Jesus, and the woman vindicated. A comparison of Matthew xxvi. 14, and Mark xiv. 10, with Luke xxii. 3, seems to indicate this to have been the occasion seized by Satan to suggest to Judas an easy way of gratifying at once his malice and avarice:—"Then entered Satan into Judas. . . . And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them."—Luke xxii. 3, 4. On the night of the betrayal, Jesus having secretly, to the beloved John, made known the traitor, by giving him the sop, the evangelist states, that, "after the sop, (*τότε*) then entered Satan into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."—John xiii. 27. Strong reasons might be given for the opinion that this address of our Saviour was designed personally for Satan. That the devil was personally present, is unquestionable. That he became the controlling agent in Judas, immediately upon his reception of the sop, is also certain. Our Lord undoubtedly knew this. His address to Judas had reference to the treason which, under the instigation of Satan, he was designing. The change of pronoun from *ἐκεῖνος*, which in the 27th and 29th verses designates Judas, to *αὐτός*, (*λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς*), seems also to require the recognition of, Satan, the nearest noun, as the proper antecedent. "After the sop, then entered (*εἰς ἐκεῖνον*) into him, Satan. Jesus therefore said (*αὐτῷ*) to him, (that is, to Satan,) What thou doest, do quickly."\* Even if this interpre-

\* A writer in *The Spirit of the Nineteenth Century*, for October, 1842, p. 466, by a number of forcible arguments, sustains the position that Satan entered personally into Judas at the time here designated. To them may be added the manner in which the preposition is repeated in the text,—(*εἰσῆλθεν εἰς ἐκεῖνον ὁ Σατανᾶς*.) We have had occasion, in another place, to indicate the fact that, in the New Testament, the phrase, *εἰσῆλθεν εἰς*, is invariably expressive of a proper entrance into the object which is governed by the preposition. See, for example, Mark ix. 25, and John xx. 4-6.



tation be rejected, and the language of our Saviour be supposed to have primary reference to Judas, it is still certain that it not only conveyed to him liberty to pursue his treacherous purpose,—it not only withdrew from him all restraining influences, but involved a like liberation of Satan, whose willing and entire instrument Judas had now become. Accordingly, he, having received the sop, went immediately out. He hastens to the priests, to complete his plans, whilst Satan awaits the opportunity for his final assault.

The season of the last fearful encounter, between the Prince of light and the power of darkness, comprehends the period from the withdrawal to Gethsemane until the cry—"It is finished"—on the cross. During this whole time, all his enemies, human and Satanic, were engaged in one combined and desperate endeavour to overcome and destroy the Son of God. Whilst the rage of men assailed his person, the deeper hate of Satan arrayed itself against his yet unsullied righteousness; and strove, by mar- rying that, at once to destroy utterly him and the world, and at the same time to triumph by the prostration in the dust of the Father's purposes of grace to man and glory to himself. In all the transactions, Satan was the master-spirit, acting under a full sense of the extremity of his cause, and with full allowance to bring all his resources to bear, in the vain endeavour to defeat the redeeming grace of God, and to subdue the woman's Seed. "This," said Jesus to the officers, "is your hour, and the power of darkness."—Luke xxii. 53. (Compare Acts xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. ii. 2; Col. i. 13.) Of the precise nature of the spiritual assaults to which Jesus was exposed during this time, the evangelists give us but little information. Much light, however, is shed upon the subject, by the twenty-second and sixty-ninth Psalms, the subject of which is the passion of our Saviour. By a comparison of these Psalms with the statements of the evangelists, we learn that this final and desperate onset of Satan assumed a form at once suited to the present gratification of his malignant hate, and presenting the only remaining resource by which he could ever hope for success in seducing Christ from the path of holy obedience. The time was now come when

justice must verify the words of the prophet:—"Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."—Zech. xiii. 7. The hour was come in which our Surety must experience the Father's desertion. The dark and polluted robe of our sins covers him; and, whilst his soul is filled with loathing and abhorrence of their blackness and enormity, he is numbered with the transgressors, and challenged, as a debtor, to give satisfaction for the whole. The spotless Lamb, the loving Son of God, is called to realize the bitterness of the Father's frown, and feel the burden of his wrath. Seizing such an hour as this, Satan and all his legions combine their powers, with malignant skill, in a furious assault, aiming to render his distress altogether intolerable, and excite in him impatience under the burden, or distrust and despair of the Father's faithfulness and love. Thus, he complains, "Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. . . . Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns."—Psalm xxii. 12–21. "They persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded."—Psalm lxi. 26. "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."—Psalm xxii. 7, 8. Viewed in the light of these Scriptures, what a scene is unveiled before us! Prostrate in the garden lies the innocent One. The Father's face is hidden; the sword of justice flames on high; the storm of wrath gathers its fury; the cup of indignation is put to his lips. Condemned and





forsaken of God, he seeks the sympathy of beloved disciples; but they are asleep. Alone,—forsaken and accursed of God, betrayed and deserted of men,—he is left to endure the mockings of the hosts of hell. They gnash upon him, and cry, "God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him."—Ps. lxxi. 11. His wrestlings with the Father are mocked by the demand, "Where is thy God?" "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground."—Luke xxii. 44. Yet, in perfect acquiescence to the Father's will, he cries, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."—Matt. xxvi. 42. He is seized and led away by the officers, guided by one of his cherished followers. His disciples all forsake him and flee. Even Peter, with cursing and swearing, denies and disowns him. A victim to outrage and indignity, in the presence of the great council of Israel; rejected by his people, with the cry, "Away with him! crucify him!" mocked by Herod and his men of war; condemned and scourged by Pilate; pursued to Calvary by the execrations of the hooting mob; nailed to the tree of ignominy, between two thieves; the temptations of Satan, re-echoed by the passing scribes and priests, who wag their heads and say, "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God: let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God,"—Matt. xxvii. 41–43; through all constrained to bear the heavier burden of the Father's frown,—what sorrow like to his sorrow? Surely, it is not in man to endure, with perfect acquiescence, the will by which he was afflicted thus; to stand faithful to Him that appointed him to the cross, and confident in the love and truth of Him who concealed his face behind a cloud, dark as that which frowned on Calvary. But Jesus was faithful to the end; and, when his work and conflict was finished, not by the power of men nor devils was his life taken away; nor into their hands did he surrender his soul; but to the Father he commits it, until the resurrection morning, then to be resumed again. When he had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished.

Father, into thy hands. I commend my spirit:" and, having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (John xix. 30, and Luke xxiii. 46.) Thus was Jesus obedient until death. The cry, "It is finished!" was the exultant shout of victory: which proclaimed Satan's sceptre broken, his power destroyed, and man's salvation complete.

In respect to the significance of this language of the expiring Redeemer, as indicating a finished work, and completed righteousness. 11. "It is counsels of the law, the evidence is very pointed finished." and conclusive. We have seen how full the testimony to the fact that such was the purpose of the Father in sending the Son, and the design of the Son in coming into the world,—to magnify the law, work a perfect righteousness, and make atonement for sin. Such were the terms of his commission, and of the covenant under which he came. In reference to his appointment to fulfil these ends, Jesus, in his prayer at the supper, anticipating the scenes of the next day as already past, says, "Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 4. And, now, on the cross, we are told by John, that after the cry, "Eli! Eli! lama sabachthani!"—"Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now, there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished."—John xix. 28–30. To all this, add the language of the risen Redeemer to his assembled disciples:—"These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me."—Luke xxiv. 44. If, then, Messiah was foretold, in the Old Testament, as he who should bruise the serpent's head,—if he was predicted as he who should magnify the law and make it honourable,—if he was "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness,"—Dan. ix. 24;—if he came to make his soul an offering for sin,—to suffer the chastisement of our peace, that



we with his stripes may be healed,—the word, "It is finished," attests all this complete. Satan is destroyed. The law is obeyed; its curse endured; its claims all satisfied; its authority established, magnified and made honourable. The honour of God's wisdom, goodness, power and justice; impeached and assailed by Satan, through man, is vindicated in the overthrow and destruction of Satan himself; in the defeat of all his designs against man; and the employment of his very malignity and hostile power, as the occasion and means of greater blessings to man, and higher glory to God. The eternal covenant, by the provisions of which the Son was sent to earth, and engaged in the conflict with Satan, is fulfilled; all its provisions of humiliation are met; and the Son has acquired the title to all the glory, power and salvation therein promised.

If further evidence is demanded of a finished legal righteousness accomplished by Christ, it is presented in his resurrection.

"In his blessed life  
I see the path, and in his death the price,  
And in his great ascent the proof supreme,  
Of immortality.—And did he rise!—  
Hear, O ye nations! hear it, O ye dead!  
He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of Death!"—YOUNG.

Vain the machinations of priests and princes. Vain the stone, the seal, the glittering guard. The dawning comes of that first day of the week! And lo! a mighty angel—whilst the earth quakes at his presence, and the terrified soldiery flee from his face—descends, and rolls back the stone, and awaits the coming forth of the Mightier than he, who condescends to lie imprisoned there. Thus the second Adam arose. He had descended into the very den of death, and yielded himself to the very jaws of the grave, only to make his victory complete. He laid down his life, that he might take it again. Now is death swallowed up in victory, and life and immortality are brought to light. He is the first fruits of them that slept,—the first born from the dead. Prior to him, some had indeed been recalled to life. But it was only for a season, again to return to the dust. But

"Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."—Rom. vi. 9. Not to the grave shall he ever return; but on high he ascends. Go, stand with the adoring apostles. Go, listen as they listened to his loving words, of grace and salvation. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. . . . And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven."—Luke xxiv. 46-51. "God is gone up with a shout! the Lord with the sound of a trumpet!"—Psalm xlvii. 5. Come forth to meet him, ye ransomed hosts, Abraham and all thy sons! He is the Son of Abraham, the Son of man. Death is abolished;—Satan is destroyed;—and redemption complete! "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in."—Psalm xxiv. 9.

If, "in that he died, he died unto sin once;"—Rom. vi. 10;—if he "hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and "was once offered to bear the sins of many;"—Heb. ix. 26, 28;—if, by law, "the wages of sin is death;"—Rom. vi. 23;—then, unquestionably, the resurrection of the second Adam is proof conclusive, that the sins for which he died are atoned for and taken away,—that the wages of sin are fully paid, and the demands of the law wholly satisfied. Henceforth, let JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU,—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, be the song of all his people.





## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE LAST ADAM A QUICKENING SPIRIT.

WE have seen that one controlling reason why the Mediator must assume a part in our nature, and put on a true humanity, was in order that his human nature, might be a fitting temple in which the Holy Spirit might dwell, making it the fountain of his influences and the seat of his redeeming power. It is in reference to this endowment of the person of Christ with the fulness of the Spirit, and the influences thence resulting, that Paul draws that remarkable contrast between the first Adam and the second:—"The first man Adam was made (*εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν*) to be a living soul, the last Adam (*εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν*) to be a quickening spirit. . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 45-49.

We are now to consider the manner in which Christ exerts this his quickening power, and confers on his people the blessings which are prepared for them by his and the Father's love.

1. The sovereign will of the royal Mediator is the sole moving cause of the work of grace. Says Jesus, "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."—John v. 21, 25, 26. Here, Christ, no doubt, has ultimate reference to the resurrection of the body. But he

speaks more immediately of the resurrection of dead souls to spiritual life. He describes a new life which was actually realized by men, when he uttered the words, in the days of his flesh; and which constituted a pledge and antepast of the resurrection of the just:—"The hour is coming, and now is. . . . Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth."—V. 28, 29. It is therefore in reference to the effectual calling of his people, that the Son of God says of himself that "he quickeneth whom he will." He teaches the same doctrine when, in another place, he says, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. . . . And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also (*μὲν δὲ ἄλλα*) I must gather in; and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."—John x. 14, 16.

2. The instrumentality through which the grace of Christ is brought home to men, is the preaching of the word. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."—Heb. xi. 6. But "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."—Rom. x. 17. Hence the argument of Paul. Citing the language of Joel, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,"—he asks, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?"—Rom. x. 13, 14. The design of the whole mission and work of the Son of God being, the revelation of the Father, he identifies that work of grace, in which the Father's glory is so signally illustrated, with the publication of an oral testimony to the divine perfections. And, having all power in heaven and earth, he has employed his power in sending forth that testimony to each one of the elect. So he says, "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice," to wit, as uttered by his ministers, to whom he says, "He that heareth you heareth me."—Luke x. 16.

3. The Spirit sent forth by Christ is the agent, through whose personal presence and efficiency the call of the gospel is made





effectual. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. iv. 6. In this work of God's power the entire nature of the man, body and soul, is possessed and pervaded by the Spirit, and united by him to the person of Christ, in whom he dwells. The soul is subjected to his supremacy, and its powers subdued under the control of his will; and the vile body is made his temple, (1 Cor. vi. 19,) and its members his instruments, (Rom. vi. 13.) This subject will be illustrated as we trace the process through which the Son of God endows his people with every perfection and grace of the image of God, robes them in perfect righteousness, exalts them to sonship with God, and bestows upon them the inheritance of heaven.

The first blessing which thus the second Adam bestows, has respect to the bondage under which his elect lie to the depravity which came in by the fall. This is broken by regeneration. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. Of this new birth, Paul says to Titus, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour."—Tit. iii. 5, 6. Here the several relations of the Persons of the Godhead to the new birth are distinctly stated. The Father is the primary author of it, by the gift of the Spirit. The person of Jesus Christ is the medium through whom he is given. He is "shed on us abundantly (*διὰ ἰσχύος Χριστοῦ*) through Jesus Christ." And to the immediate power of the Spirit thus shed down, is the cleansing and renewing work attributed. Regeneration is that change which occurs in the soul, by virtue of the entrance of Christ's Spirit, as an indwelling power, assuming a sovereignty absolute and entire over the whole being. Whereas, in the unregenerate, the old man, the apostate nature of Adam, maintains supreme control, and determines the attitude of the powers, and the actions of the life,—the Spirit of Christ, entering into his people in regeneration, acts as a new and divine nature, by the power of which the old nature is brought into subjection, and the child of God is led contrary to it, in the ways of new obedience.

In reference to the efficiency of the Spirit in engrafting the elect into the person of Christ, imparting to them his mind, and endowing them with his justifying righteousness and immortal life and glory, he is called "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,"—Rom. viii. 2; and his entrance is the communication of life,—the life of Christ to the soul. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John v. 12. Paul says of himself, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. The effect of the entrance of this life of Christ into the soul is instantaneously realized in the restoration of the nature and powers to conformity with the likeness of Christ and of God. The saints are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works,"—Eph. ii. 10. "The new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."—Col. iii. 10. It, "after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 24. The reason is enlightened to know the truth of God; and the conscience, to apprehend and admire the beauty and glory of his holiness. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Thus is the moral sense restored to its pristine office, and enabled to apprehend, admire and adore the glorious beauty of God's perfections and the riches of his boundless love. At the same time, the promise of Christ is fulfilled by the Comforter, who brings all things to remembrance and guides into all truth.

Whilst thus the man is brought into the light of God's truth and beholds with joy his matchless excellency, the love of God seizes the soul and controls the will. The soul beholding the glory of God, and the nature conformed to his image,—the affections and the will flow in harmony with the renewed and



enlightened nature, in the love and imitation of the divine perfections, and obedience to the law of God. The works of the flesh are abandoned, and its lusts crucified; whilst the fruits of the Spirit grow,—“love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”—Gal. v. 22, 23.

In one aspect of it, regeneration is the beginning of a work which is finished in sanctification. In another, it is an instantaneous act, complete and finished in itself. The old man is actually crucified; the native corruptions and lusts may linger for a season, but they are wounded unto death. The new man is after God created. The Spirit of Christ has taken possession of soul and body,—a possession which is full and entire, and which will be final and forever, since “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”—Rom. xi. 29. The life of Christ is begun in the soul. The person has become a member of Christ,—of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Henceforth, on earth, for glory or shame, Christ's portion is his; and his, the life and immortality of Christ, in the heavens.

Another immediate result of union with Christ is, investiture in his righteousness, to our justification. Whilst the Holy Spirit is the author of the new birth, “it is God (the Father,) that justifies.”—Rom. viii. 33. Justification is that decree of God's justice, wherein the sinner, being cited to the bar, and appearing clothed in the spotless and perfect righteousness of Christ his Head, is therein justified; that is, pronounced to be righteous and entitled to the covenant promise of eternal life.

1. The matter of justification is that very, whole and entire righteousness which the Lord Jesus wrought by his obedience and suffering. This follows from the very manner of the justification itself, and is abundantly attested in the Scriptures. Either, Christ answers wholly for us, or, not at all. Either, we are members of the body, and our relation to the law consequently merged in that of our Head, so that, at the bar, we are known only in him and endowed with all his fulness; or, we are not members, and, if not, have no interest in the Head, nor He a voice on our behalf. Of such he says, “I never knew you.”

The relation to the Head which causes that we are not looked upon in our sins, but in him who knew no sin, at once induces our own righteousnesses, as well as our sins, to be hidden behind Christ, and enrobes us in his whole merits and honour. Christ, and he only, “is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”—Rom. x. 4. He “of God is made unto us . . . righteousness.”—1 Cor. i. 30. “In his days,” says the prophet, “Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name, whereby he shall be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”—Jer. xxiii. 6. “In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.”—Isa. xlv. 25. “As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”—Rom. v. 18, 19. As the apostasy of Adam immediately involved all who were in him under condemnation, prior to and irrespective of any of the actual sins which the apostate nature causes in them personally,—so the righteousness of the second Adam is the sole and immediate ground of the justification of all who are in him, prior to and irrespective of the holy obedience which the indwelling Spirit of Christ works in them.

2. The ground of the justification of the elect,—the cause of the imputation to them of the righteousness of Christ,—is, their actual inbeing in Christ. They are “accepted in the Beloved,”—Eph. i. 6,—because they really are in him. Christ's righteousness is theirs, because he, whose is that righteousness, is theirs. If Christ himself is free from condemnation, it cannot reach those who are in him. If he stands justified and entitled to eternal life and glory, as the covenant reward of his perfect and finished obedience,—they that are in him, the members of his body, must needs be included in the sentence of his justification and the award to him of eternal life. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. . . . For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”—Rom. viii. 1, 2. Here





justification is announced:—"There is no condemnation." Its ground is stated:—it is "to them which are *in Christ*." And its mode is described:—"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free." The controlling power of the Spirit of Christ, dwelling in and ruling the soul, and uniting it to Christ, imparts his freedom from the curse, which he has exhausted, and from the law, which he has condescended freely to obey, which he has fully satisfied, and over which he now asserts his divine supremacy. The same idea the apostle urges in another form, when he says, "My brethren, ye are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead,"—and so proved independent of the law, whose curse is thus shown to be exhausted,—"that we should bring forth fruit unto God."—Rom. vii. 4. Again, the apostle, having stated the enmity of the carnal mind to God, and the consequent displeasure of God against those who are in the flesh, adds, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you," to wit, by his Spirit, "the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness,"—the righteousness of Christ, which it imparts.—Rom. viii. 9, 10. Hence the declaration of the same apostle in another place:—"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God, by faith."—Phil. iii. 8, 9.

3. The instrumental cause of the appropriation of the righteousness of Christ, in order to justification, is faith. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. v. 1. As the Head of the Church has seen good to make the knowledge of the truth an invariable prerequisite to salvation,—so has he appointed faith in that testimony, as the means through which his righteousness is

applied to the justifying of the soul. Essentially, justification takes place immediately upon union with Christ by the Spirit; which, in the case of infants, may precede the knowledge which is requisite to actual faith. But, in a strict legal sense, the decree of justification is only issued when the party has made an actual appearance at the bar, and pleaded the righteousness of Christ. This is the office of faith, which is a grace wrought in the heart by the ingrafting Spirit, whereby we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

The importance and necessity of faith in order to justification, is consequent upon its relation to the revealing plan. God having put into operation the instrumentalities which we have seen to concur in making known the divine nature and perfections, the acceptance of that testimony must be esteemed by him of an importance proportioned to the dignity and variety of the witnesses whom he has commissioned, the demonstration of the evidence, and the sovereignty and condescension of Him who has seen good thus to reveal himself. If the revelation of the Most High was an object becoming the creation of all things, the formation of man, and his redemption by the incarnate Word,—proportionately important is that faith without which the testimony is all in vain. Further, in the exercise of faith, the believer becomes a witness whose testimony is added to all the rest, confirming the evidence and proclaiming it abroad. The Son of God is the Revealer in whom, especially as incarnate and crucified for sin, all other testimony concentrates its light. In him the whole revelation culminates; and therefore faith in him is essential to any true belief in God, or acceptance with him. Hence the appointment of faith in Christ as the alone and indispensable prerequisite to salvation. Not as though it were a meritorious condition; but as an indispensable evidence and infallible proof of being truly a member of Christ. If we are in Christ, we will have the Spirit of Christ. And, if we have his Spirit, we will assuredly exercise implicit faith and trust in his testimony. Of the relation of faith to the truth as a revelation of God, the beloved disciple tells us that, "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth



not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."—1 John v. 10. And the Baptist says that "what the Son hath seen and heard, that he testifieth. . . . He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God."—John iii. 32-34. The Spirit of Christ, dwelling within, takes of the things of Christ, shows them in their demonstration and glory to the soul, and works faith in the witness thus given. It testifies of the freeness, fulness and sufficiency of his atoning work, and induces the soul to take refuge in him. The ministers of the law cite the party to appear at the bar of justice. The believer answers by pleading Christ. That plea is of itself an immediate and infallible proof that he by whom it is made has the Spirit of Christ, is a member of his body, and entitled, as such, to the merits of the Head. There is therefore no condemnation; but, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. v. 1.

The adoption of sons is another of the endowments which Christ confers on his people, by union with himself. "As many § 4. The adoption of sons. as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 12, 13. The adoption and sonship arise out of the concurrence of two circumstances. First, the regeneration is wrought by the Holy Spirit, acting as the incorruptible seed; and, since it is the Spirit of God, it follows that they who are thus born again are born of God, and are therefore his children. Hence the statement of Paul:—"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."—Rom. viii. 14, 15. Second, the regeneration being wrought by the Spirit given through the person of Christ, and uniting the elect to him, the oneness with him so caused induces in them a communion in his relation to the Father. As he is the only begotten Son, they who are in

him are, in him, sons. "God sent forth his Son, . . . to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5.

As a consequence of the sonship thus arising, believers are invested with a title to the inheritance in the heavens with Christ. "Wherefore," says Paul, "thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."—Gal. iv. 7. "If children, then heirs,—heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. viii. 17.

To those upon whom Christ thus confers the adoption of sons, he also gives the privilege of the most endeared intimacy, communion and fellowship with himself and the Father.

§ 5. Communion with God. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. Thus, not only is access to the presence of God permitted, but the Father himself sends forth his own Spirit to persuade his children to draw near with confidence and call upon him. Nay, further, the blessed Godhead condescends to come and take up its abode in the soul, which is united to the Son. So, Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him,"—John xiv. 23; and of the Spirit, he tells his disciples, "He dwelleth with you and shall be in you."—John xiv. 17. Hence, John writes, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3.

Of the communion thus realized, the Spirit of Christ is the immediate efficient cause. Sent forth from the Father by and through the Son, and remaining in the hearts of the regenerate, he imparts to them the testimony of God, seals to them his love, and excites in them responsive affections and heavenward breathings. Hence Paul, having, in the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, traced the relation of the indwelling Spirit to justification, regeneration, sanctification, the resurrection of the body, and the adoption, adds, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should





pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."—Rom. viii. 26, 27.

The communion with God which was enjoyed by Adam in innocence was that of a highly favoured servant. That which the second Adam enjoys and confers on his seed is the intimacy of a beloved Son,—an intimacy in which the Father encourages his children to come with boldness and confiding trust to his bosom; whilst he is alike ready to listen to the burden of the weary, the care-worn and sorrowing heart, unbosomed to a sympathizing friend; to the confessions of contrition, bewailing indwelling corruptions and actual sins; the cry of the repenting rebel seeking at length to mercy long despised; and to the thanksgivings of hearts rejoicing in experience of the grace of God,—the praises of such as have caught some glimpses of his beauty,—and the adorations of those whose larger discoveries of his glorious majesty and unsearchableness cause the breathing forth of the cry of "Holy! Holy!" No member of Christ so obscure or so lowly but is privileged with this access, and persuaded and commanded to come nigh thus unto God, and hold fellowship with the eternal One. Nor does God thus gather the brethren of his Son, the children of his adoption, into his presence, without bestowing upon them favours proportionate to his greatness. Each Person of the Godhead brings gifts for their endowment. The Son assures them in all their temptations and sorrows of his presence and compassion.—"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33. "We have not a high-priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. iv. 15. And "in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."—Heb. ii. 18. He breathes upon them and confers his Spirit and his peace, and gives them evidence of interest in his person, and title to his righteousness,

and inheritance with him. The Father testifies his love, in the assurance, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters."—2 Cor. vi. 18. And "though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations;" it is to the end "that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. i. 6, 7. The Holy Spirit breathes into the heart his consolations, unveils to it the glory of the Father and Son, testifies of their love, and gives birth within the soul to graces and affections which are heaven begun,—meekness, gentleness, faith, love, joy, peace.

If such is the character of the communion which the children of God enjoy whilst dwelling here under the cloud, amid sighings and sorrows, temptations and sins, what will it be when they shall see the King in his beauty and dwell forever in his temple? "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. And, to this blessed promise, the heart of every saint responds:—It is enough;—"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."—Psalm xvii. 15.

That work of grace in the soul, which is begun in the new birth, is completed in sanctification. In regeneration, the apostate nature is brought under curb and subjection to the Spirit of Christ. In sanctification, the soul is, by degrees, purged of its apostate tendencies; the old man gradually expires, and the nature is moulded, by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, into a free and spontaneous harmony with Christ's nature, after the image of God. That the Spirit should dwell in the soul as a supreme, pervasive and controlling agent, and yet depravity and sin remain, is a fact which is entirely beyond our comprehension. But, whilst the mode of its occurrence is inscrutable, the purpose of it would seem to be clear. The design of the whole work of God being the revelation of himself,—that revelation, to suit the finite capacities for which it is designed, must gradually unfold itself. In particular,

§ 6. Sanctification of the Spirit.





were the elect instantaneously sanctified, neither would they nor others be able to apprehend the depth of ruin from which they are rescued, nor the nature nor extent of the mercy and grace of which they are monuments. But when, through years of conflict, they learn to put a just estimate upon the depravity of their nature, and step by step attain deliverance from it, and win the height of holiness and the joy of heaven, they are furnished with a means, not otherwise attainable, of estimating the love and grace, the wisdom and power, of the redeeming God. In view of this design of the work and conflict of the Christian, his sanctification is wrought through the instrumentality of the truth. "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Cor. iii. 18. Hence the prayer of our Saviour, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."—John xvii. 17. The Spirit, showing the things of Christ to the soul, engraves in it the likeness of God thus discovered, and enlarges the capacities of the growing believer for the discovery and enjoyment of still brighter glories and profounder mysteries in the measureless nature of the Most High.

Whilst the truth is the instrumentality, the Spirit is the efficient agent, of our sanctification. Nor is it questionable what must, in this respect, be the result, when a creature is born of God, and has the seed of God, the Spirit of holiness, remaining in him:—"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,"—Gal. v. 17; and, since the Spirit is almighty, it must overcome. Here occurs one of those apparent contradictions which are incident to the anomalous condition of man, as apostate, and yet not overwhelmed under the curse; redeemed, and not yet fitted for heaven. The same apostle who declares that he that is born of God cannot sin, says, in the beginning of the same short epistle, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."—1 John i. 8, 10. We have already pointed

out a characteristic of the renewed man, which is the key to the harmony of these seemingly incongruous declarations.\* In the person of the child of God there co-exist the old man and the new, the flesh and the Spirit. The old man, the flesh, although crucified and expiring, is not actually dead, but retains a lingering vitality sufficient to induce continual actings of sin; so that the pretence of freedom from actual sin would be a lie. But, on the other hand, the sins thus occurring are characteristic of that old, carnal nature, which is doomed and dying; they belong not to the new man. On the contrary, the new, the inward man,—the "I, myself,"—delights in God's law, does not allow, and cannot commit, sin:—"Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, *that is, in my flesh*, dwelleth no good thing."—Rom. vii. 17, 18. Thus, in the renewed man, whilst sin, and sin only, remains in the members—the flesh,—his heart is the temple of the Holy Ghost. The inward man delights in God's law, and abhors the deeds of the flesh; so that, most truly is it said that he cannot sin. Nay, even the sins of which his flesh is guilty, and for which it is condemned and dying, he allows not; and, whilst he sees a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, that law in his members is, and is felt to be, a hostile power, from which the soul revolts,—in regard to which, its constant cry is, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" and from which it takes refuge in the abundant power of the Redeemer:—"I thank God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. vii. 23-25. Well, therefore, does the apostle state this, as the evidence and test of the reality of a work of grace:—"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."—1 John iii. 10.

So long as is needful for the higher blessedness of the elect, in their eternal state, and for the glory of God, which is identified therewith, they are left to maintain the conflict with corruption, but with assurance of complete final victory and triumph:—"In all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us."—Rom. viii. 37. God worketh in us both to will and

\* Above, page 454.



to do of his good pleasure; and, having begun such a work, he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. When we see him in his glory as he is, we shall be like him.

That same indwelling Spirit of Christ which is the pledge and fountain of perfection to the soul, is the seal and power of the resurrection of the body, and of eternal life in heaven. The Captain of salvation, who has undertaken the destruction of Satan and his works, will not leave one trophy of his people in the hands of the enemy. Their very dust shall be gathered, and made to share in the triumph and the glory. The Holy Spirit, imparted by Christ to his people, and dwelling in them, is the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession; and, that earnest being conferred on the body, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost, as well as on the soul, the body is thus assured of triumph over the curse in the resurrection of life. Accordingly, Paul states our communion in Christ as the fundamental principle, in that discussion of the form and manner of the resurrection which occurs in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians:—"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "The first man Adam was made to be a living soul, the last Adam to be a quickening Spirit." This doctrine is Paul's favourite resort for the consolation of distressed and persecuted believers. He describes himself as "persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. . . . Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also (*ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς*) through Jesus, and shall present us with you. . . . We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now, he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing (*ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο*, he that hath so modified our nature by renewing grace as to adapt us to this very design) is God, who also hath given unto

us the earnest of the Spirit."—2 Cor. iv. 9-18; v. 1-5. Precisely parallel to this is his statement to the Romans, viii. 11-23. He asserts that, "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you;" and, having stated the adoption, he adds, "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, ('always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,'—2 Cor. iv. 10,) that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us;" to wit, when our bodies shall be made like unto Christ's glorious body. "For the earnest expectation of the creature (the believer's body) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the body was made subject to vanity, (decay and dissolution,) not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same; in hope that the body itself also (as well as the soul) shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that (*πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις*) the bodies of all men (of the world at large) together groan and travail in pain until now: and not only so, but we also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, (in the regeneration of our souls;) even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." That (*ἡ κτίσις*) "the creature," here means, the body, we conclude, upon several considerations. (1.) The whole representation is an expansion of the assurance given, in verses 17, 18, of a glory to be revealed in our persons, compensative for the persecutions which the mortal flesh experiences by sharing in the sufferings of Christ. (2.) The creature is an heir of deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. To say that any thing else than the body of the believer is co-heir with his soul to that inheritance, is simply to destroy the meaning, and deny the reality of the adoption itself. (3.) The occasion of the groaning is, in the 23d verse, and in the passage from the epistle to the Corinthians, distinctly stated. It is a bondage of corruption, from which the body is





to be redeemed by the fruition of that adoption, the first fruits of which the soul has already realized. The parallelism of this verse with the 21st, and its contrast with the 22d, in which all the creatures (the bodies of the unbelieving world) are represented as groaning, but without hope, concur to the same conclusion. (4.) The identity of the theme and argument, here, and in the passage which we have quoted from the second epistle to the Corinthians, confirms the conclusion thus attained.

Thus, then, are the bodies of believers embraced with their souls in the redemption of Christ and the adoption of sons of God. They are temples of the Holy Spirit, and members of Christ, (1 Cor. vi. 15, 19;) and as soon may his sceptre itself be broken, and the throne of God's glory overturned, as a temple of the Spirit fall to ruins, or a member of Christ's body be severed. Hence the declaration of Jesus, at the grave of Lazarus:—"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 25, 26. Even though the mortal body moulder into dust, it is not dissolved, nor the tie of union between it and the soul severed, as it is in those who die under the curse. The Spirit of life dwells in the soul, in the bosom of God, and holds possession of the clay which mingles with dust. Having once rescued it from the power of Satan and the curse, and made it his possession and dwelling,—having made the members instruments of holiness to God,—the almighty Spirit of Christ will never surrender his conquest, nor leave his temple. He is a power of unfailling vitality to the unconscious clay,—a principle of germination whence the glorious body of the resurrection shall arise. (1 Cor. xv. 36–38.) God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. It is not death which the believer is called to realize; but a sleep, which is destined to a glorious awakening. "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."—1 Cor. xv. 52, 53. Not that we are to be unclothed,—to part with the bodies here possessed,—but clothed upon, that mortality may be swal-

lowed up of life. (2 Cor. v. 4.) Our vile body shall be changed, that it may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.)

Thus complete is the redeeming work of the Son of God. Thus does the woman's Seed utterly defeat the malice of Satan, destroy his work, rescue his victims, and reveal God's glorious sovereignty, his spotless holiness and eternal love. Thus effectual is the quickening energy of the second Adam. Blotting out the handwriting that was against his people, and nailing it to his own cross,—breaking Satan's yoke from off their necks, and renewing them after his own image in the likeness of the Father,—he clothes them in the glorious garment of his finished and everlasting righteousness; gives them a right to become sons of God, and joint heirs with himself to the inheritance of glory; frees them from the power of sin; adorns them with the perfection of every grace; admits them to fellowship with God; and fits them to shine in perfection of holiness in heaven;—and, to signalize the completeness of his triumph, the utter discomfiture of Satan and removal of the curse, he asserts his title to their very dust, and will rescue it from the power of death, and their bodies from the grave; adorn them in the finished beauty of his own perfect form, and seat them with himself on the throne of supreme dominion in the blessedness of eternal life. Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we have not yet contemplated all the effects which are wrought by the quickening power of the second Adam. Christ  
 § 8. *The church* is not only the Redeemer of the elect individually. *Christ's body.* As the husband is the head of the wife, so "Christ is the Head of the church. And he is the Saviour of the body."—Eph. v. 23. His title as Head has reference alike to the relation which the church sustains as his body and as his bride,—relations which, as we have formerly seen, are identical, and derived from that of the first Adam to her who was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. As the body and bride of the



second Adam, the church is, in and with him, the Head, the noblest revelation of the infinite glories of the Godhead; and that designation by which he is called, "THE HEAD OF THE BODY," is the consummate title of the Redeemer, in which, as relates to the church, all his other names are involved. He is the Prophet, Priest and King of his people. They are taught by his word and Spirit, redeemed by his blood and governed by his laws. But they are elected and called to all this, in order that, incorporated into his body, and pervaded by the Spirit of the Head, they may display his perfections, and "show forth the praises of him who hath called them."—1 Pet. ii. 9. They are not so much subjects, obedient to his laws, as, members, conformed to the Head, and with him co-partners in the kingdom and throne. (Rev. iii. 21.) They are not only taught by his formal instructions; rather are they pervaded and enlightened by that very same Spirit of knowledge which is his Spirit, and is the truth itself. (1 John ii. 20, 27.) They are not merely purchased with his blood; but, as one with him, are partakers of the same sufferings, to the glory of the same God, and inheritance of the same joy. (Rom. viii. 17; Col. i. 24; 1 Pet. iv. 13.)

It does not enter into our present plan to discuss at length, the constitution and history of the church, as viewed in this light. The subject would demand to itself a distinct and large treatise. We can here only point out two or three of the leading facts as bearing upon the general design of the present discussion.

The Spirit of Christ, as imparted to his people, does not exercise a merely several and separate indwelling in them individually; but a common presence, exerting an assimilating and incorporating power, first, into Christ, the Head; and then, of all believers into each other, his members. In all, he is the one fountain of a common life, which is hid with Christ in God. In all, he is the one source of holiness and principle of divine growth. In all, he is the one energy and pledge of a glorious resurrection from the grave, one power of an endless life in heaven. In all, of all generations, whether long since dead, or yet for ages to come unborn, he is one bond of identity each with all the rest, so that they all are one; and of joint communion and property

in the Head; and this, by virtue of the fact that the uniting Spirit inhabiteth eternity; and makes no account of the lapse of time, the transitions of ages, and the mutations of generations. By the one Spirit are all, of all ages, baptized into one body, and made partakers of one common life, which, comprehending all time, will continue after time forever on high.

The body thus created is not a mere aggregation of individuals, the mere company of redeemed persons. But, as many scriptures certify, it is a thoroughly organized body, symmetrical in its proportions, and perfect in its members. By this we do not mean that organization which results from the formal association of believers in visible assemblies, and the appointment of officers in them; but a higher, a spiritual organization, which, by virtue of common union with the Head, thence imparts to the members severally the several gifts requisite for the edifying of the whole and the fulfilling of its great end. Thus, no member is without his own appropriate gifts and offices; and the failure of any one to exercise his gifts and fulfil the duties to which by the Spirit he is called, results necessarily in marring the proportions of the whole body, and impeding all its functions. "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."—1 Cor. xii. 26. To this purpose Paul argues at large:—"Now, there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. . . . Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Cor. xii. 4-27.

Correspondent to the spiritual organization which is here spoken of, is the true constitution of the visible church; and in





proportion as the power and influences of the organizing Spirit are admitted to absolute control in the several branches of the visible body, will they be conformed to that constitution. Of its form we cannot at present speak.

In harmony with the office which is filled by the Son of God, is that to which he has called and organized his body the church.

*§ 9. It is his witness.* As he is the Adam from heaven, the image of the invisible God, the Word of God, by whom God is manifested and made known in all his perfections,—to that end has he organized his church, and given her commission to the world;—to bear witness to him and the Father. Her Head is the faithful and true Witness;—her apostles, prophets and pastors, are the witnesses to the testimony of Jesus;—and she is herself the light of the world. Her commission is given in the words of the prophet:—"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light; and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Isa. lx. 1-3. Thus, as in the darkness of the night, the paler moon shines in the reflected light of the sun, so, in the absence of the Sun of righteousness, does the church shed abroad the reflected light of his glory.

It is in reference to the office of the church as thus designed to shed abroad God's glory, that the hieroglyphic by which she is symbolized is a candlestick or lamp-stand, with its burning lamps. John saw the Son of man in the midst of seven golden candlesticks; which were the seven churches; whilst, after the same iden, seven stars in his right hand were the angels or officers of the seven churches. (Rev. i. 20.) Such was the meaning of the candlestick of gold, which stood in the tabernacle and temple of old. Burning continually in that part of the sacred place, which, veiled from the light of day, symbolized the earth,—as, illumined by the shekinah, the holy of holies did heaven,—it was the type of Christ's church, shedding light upon the world.

The office to which the church is thus set apart, is fulfilled by the example of holiness, and the illustration of the power of

redeeming grace, which she exhibits in herself,—by her oral testimony, official and private,—by symbolical teaching, in the sacraments,—and by discipline. By example she testifies to the competence of Christ's redeeming grace, to the love of the Father, and the renewing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. By example she commends the truth and value of the gospel; whilst she proclaims it, in oral instructions, to the understandings and consciences of men. In the sacraments, she bears witness in another mode to the necessity and power of renewing and ingrafting grace, and the freeness and virtue of the sacrifice of Calvary. In the exercise of discipline, excluding from her society and fellowship the unholy, receiving believers and correcting their faults, she attests the sovereignty and holiness of the God whom she worships, and the purity which he requires of those who come before him, and marks the separation between the people of Christ and of Satan.

Such being the office to which the church is called, it follows, from the fact that in her is the Holy Spirit,—a living Spirit, exerting a controlling energy,—that she will always be found engaged, with more or less faithfulness, in the performance of the functions of her office. Hence the marks of the true church:—"Wherever we find the word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there, it is not to be doubted, is a church of Christ."\* It is "those that profess the true religion,"† as well as possess it, who constitute the church; and it is not the pretence of being the true church, nor lineal inheritance from those who were the true people of God, but the bearing of a testimony to his truth, which is determinate. In this respect, God's people are not left in the dark, or exposed to any difficulty in applying the test. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8. So, says Jesus, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits."—Matt. vii. 15, 16. Thus is the

\* Calvin's Institutes, Book iv. Ch. i. 9.

† Confession, Ch. xxv. 2.





humblest child of God authorized and qualified to test every body which claims to be the church of God, and recognise or reject the claim, according to the one criterion of faithfulness in testifying, in word and life, to the truth of God as recorded in the Scriptures.

The blindness and depravity which still remain in the flesh of Christ's followers have resulted in the division of the true church into a number of branches, all of which are so far approved that they bear a testimony which accords essentially with the truth. But, among them, it must of necessity be that some are nearer the standard than others. Hence arises a question which every thoughtful child of God will feel to be of no little importance:—How are the various branches of the church to be judged in respect to their relative faithfulness and the consequent favor and blessing of the Head? The criterion is the same already indicated. (1.) Christ is not to be divided; and the Spirit of Christ, dwelling in the whole body, is one. Where therefore he most fully dwells, he will develop the most perfect sympathy, the most cordial recognition and embrace; and the most lively affection for all who call upon the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, of whatever name. (2.) Where the Spirit thus dwells, God's word will be held in the highest honour, and its testimony published with the greatest faithfulness and freedom from mixture with the traditions of men. (3.) The rites which God has ordained, and the institutions which he has appointed, will be kept pure and entire from improvements or additions of men's devising. (4.) The discipline of God's house will be maintained in its purity; and the holiness of the Head will be reflected in the members. In a word, where God's Spirit most abundantly dwells, the testimony for all the truth of God will, in every form, be most fully and faithfully maintained,—the office of the church will be most fully performed; and, as a consequence, the line of separation will be most broadly drawn between its spirit and that of the world.

The church of Christ sprang into life with the utterance of the promise to the fallen pair in the garden. With the promise, the Spirit was sent to work faith and repent-

† 10. History  
of the church.

ance in their hearts; the exercise of which graces is proved by the fact that God gave the seal to faith in the bloody sacrifices which he appointed, and in the garments which he made them of the skins of the sacrificial animals, typical of the righteousness of Christ. The very beginning of the history of the church, thus established, was marked by an event—the murder of Abel—which signalized the hostility to which the witnessing church must ever be subject from the children of the world, the seed of the serpent. Says John to the saints, "Ye are not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."—1 John iii. 12, 13. In the family of Seth the church was continued, whilst Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. But although we find an Enoch walking with God, and for his faith and holiness translated, yet so alluring to human corruption were the pleasures of the world, that the "sons of God" by degrees abandoned their profession, and allied themselves with the ungodly, until Noah and his family remained alone of all the race, faithful to warn a guilty world, when the surging waters of the flood were ready to sweep away at once all traces of their existence and their crimes.

Peacefully borne upon the waters, safe in the midst of universal ruin, God preserved his church; and, no sooner is the danger past, than the ransomed family erect an altar, and call upon the Lord, who seals with them a covenant of peace, by the bow in the cloud. Yet, with the memory of this, God's judgment, ever before them, and its monuments all around them, how quickly did the children of Noah go astray! We hear of a pious Abimelech, and of a Melchizedek, priest of the most high God; but besides these the whole world seems turned to idols.

The time had now come, in the designs of God, for the organization of the church as a distinctive body. The prior dispensation was tentative, and the church was, under it, unorganized. In it was tried the question, whether the world, voluntarily apostate, would, as a whole, freely and at once return to the freely offered covenant of peace;—whether it would cease from rebellion, and cordially accept the offers of grace. The result showed



the world alike obdurate to the arguments of interest, the persuasions of mercy, and the terrors of judgments;—not only lost to holiness and peace, but deliberately and pertinaciously lost to the claims of gratitude, the motives of reason and the attractions of goodness. But now was the church formally organized, for preserving and transmitting the knowledge of the truth to the end of time,—for the erection of a standard for God, and maintaining a testimony for him against the apostasy of a rebel world.

Abram was called from Ur of the Chaldees. He buried his father, and left his brother's children in Haran, and was at length left, by the separation of Lot at Sodom, a pilgrim and a stranger upon the earth; alone, with his beloved Sarai. With him was established the covenant of peace:—"I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee,"—Gen. xvii. 7; "and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,"—Gen. xxii. 18. But the church, as erected in the family of Abraham, was not designed for the publication of the truth and the proclamation of the promise, but to keep and transmit it to others. She was not privileged to bear forward the standard into the conflict with the world and Satan for the possession of the earth, but to guard it, planted in the camp, until the day of battle and conquest. Erected in Canaan, in the very midst of the lands, its light gleamed afar upon the surrounding nations,—shining, not to dispel, but to condemn, the darkness. That was the time of the minority of the church. As yet immature for her great commission, she was "under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father,"—Gal. iv. 2. The saints of that age, "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect,"—Heb. xi. 39, 40.

At length the fulness of time was come, and God sent forth his own Son into the world. He "loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such

thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. v. 26, 27. Thus, having brought her up for himself, did the Son of God celebrate the espousals, purchasing her to himself at a price of blood. Then gave he her the world as her field, and the nations as her possession, with the promise that "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."—Dan. vii. 27. Thus espoused to himself, and endowed with a goodly dowry, he left her for a season, to return and dwell with her forever. As he departs, he gives her his commission of grace:—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,"—Mark xvi. 15. And "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men;"—gifts of grace to the world, and of love to the church. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,"—Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12.

But though thus organized and commissioned, thus qualified and endowed, she may not yet enter on the glory. Not yet is the kingdom given to Israel. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord,"—Matt. x. 25. It is enough for the bride that she be as her husband. If he was abased before the exaltation,—if he shed his blood to win the glory,—it is a small thing that she should be partaker in the shame and sufferings of her glorious Head. Yet, through centuries of imbecility and unfruitfulness, of persecution and apostasy, must she learn, that it is not her own arm that bringeth salvation; that it is not for her sake—faithless and forgetful—that he doeth this, but for his own name's sake; that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts, that the world is to be overcome, and the kingdom of righteousness and peace established. But she shall at length appear in beauty and power. She shall "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,"—Song of Solomon, vi. 10. Hitherto hath she rather bowed in widowhood and mourning, than sat as a queen,





or rejoiced as a bride. But the time draws near when her beauty, hitherto veiled, shall shine forth;—when, her widowhood ended, her tears shall cease, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Such is she whose beauty delights the King—the bride, glorious and radiant in purest gold. Her body, the blood-bought host. Her office, the vindication of the honour of the Holy One in the presence of an apostate world. Her organization fitted in perfect adaptation to this end; in the perfection of beauty,—the glory of holiness which shines in her person; in the divine authority of her apostles, the wisdom and diligence of her evangelists and prophets, her pastors and teachers; the zeal and faithfulness, of her elders, and the charity and self-sacrifice of her deacons. Her robes,—of fine linen, spotless white, embroidered with gold,—the marriage gift of her husband. Her history, one of affliction and suffering, of toil and triumph, in his service. To the carnal eye there is in her, as in the King, no form nor comeliness. But to him she is altogether lovely; and to all holy beings, how radiant does her person appear, as she stands before the world, in the midst of the darkness of man's apostasy and sin, and the gloom of the curse, leaning on the arm of the Beloved, and testifying of his loveliness and grace; herself the purchase of his streaming blood and dying groans; herself his commissioned witness to the lost, proclaiming peace and offering salvation; herself baptized by that one Spirit with which he was anointed; and her whole being pervaded and quickened with the power and vitality of his life; she the fruitful mother of the many sons whom he will at length assemble on high. Shining in glory forever, sharing with the King in his throne, his sceptre and power, shall she present the perfection of beauty and the fruition of joy. In her will a wondering universe behold the riches of God's condescending grace, and the majesty of the Lamb's redeeming power; her countenance, beaming in his perfect likeness, and her beauty and blessedness, her history and state, the noblest display of the unsearchable depths of God's glorious wisdom and ineffable love, the subject of angelic studies, and the theme of all heaven's adoring song.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND GLORY.

IN the preceding pages we have traced some of the grand outlines of the wonderful system of divine wisdom and love. *§ 1. Recapitulation.* Of the whole discussion, this is the sum. The entire work of God has its origin in his eternal purpose to make himself known, to the glory of his own perfections; the infinite blessedness and honour of man, and the eternal happiness of all the holy creatures. That purpose was embodied in a perfect and all-embracing plan, which was devised by infinite wisdom, and the fulfilment of which is secured by the mutual covenant and oath of the Persons of the Godhead. By that covenant the Son of God was installed the revealing Mediator, through whom alone any creature can ever come to the knowledge of God; and through whom all holy beings shall attain to an adoring, loving and obedient communication with the invisible One. By it he was set up the eternal King and Head over all things,—to whose omnipotent and glorious sceptre the fulfilment of the plan is intrusted,—and ordained Head of the elect, the church, in which, with him, the grand elements of the covenant concentrate their interest, and the glories of the Godhead pre-eminently shine. By the covenant Mediator was the material universe made out of nothing, and so organized and adapted, so upheld and governed, as to constitute at once a platform for the development of the plan and a proclamation of the being, power and godhead of the Creator. The angelic intelligences were called into being by him, and endowed with intellectual and moral powers which qualify them to behold and appreciate the work of God, and in it discover and adore his perfections, alike as seen in the material creation, revealed



in their own moral natures, discovered to their consciences, and unfolded in the successive chapters of the plan. Their moral natures constitute the first announcement of a moral nature in God. Of it the holy law is a distinct exposition in didactic form, its precepts being a transcript of the perfections of that very nature. The authority of that law consists in the proprietary right of God as the self-existent Creator; and its excellence, in the fact that it is an expression of his perfections, to the imitation of which it calls the creatures; whilst its unalterable and imperative mandate asserts his absolute authority, its promise proclaims his goodness, and its penal curse reveals the spotless purity of his holiness, the sovereignty of his sceptre, the strictness of his justice and terribleness of his wrath. In the holiness of the elect angels is exemplified the excellence of God's moral perfections, whilst their blessedness exhibits, in its simplest form, the greatness of his goodness and love. Those perfections are brought out in yet stronger relief by the contrasted wickedness of Satan's apostasy, and his moral deformity and that of his followers; whilst naked justice and unmingled wrath shine forth in their perdition.

But whilst the godhead of the Eternal is signally proclaimed in the creation, and the broad outlines of his moral perfections set forth in his holy law, and illustrated in the angels, holy and apostate,—and whilst that law is an unambiguous intimation of the plurality of the subsistence of the one God, by virtue of the fact that a moral nature implies relation, and, therefore, community,—yet were further means requisite for the exhibition of the glories of God in unclouded light; for the discovery of unbounded wisdom, unspotted holiness and unfaltering justice, in triumphant harmony with infinite love and compassion, boundless mercy and grace, exercised toward the apostate and depraved; and for the unfolding of the mystery of the tri-personality of the divine subsistence, and the nature and mode of the relations of the Three who subsist in the one essence of the invisible God. This earth is the chosen scene of these discoveries, and man their subject. The dispensation in which they are embraced is heralded by that creative Word, "Let there

be light!" and its close is wrapped in the unspeakable glories of that day when the blessed shall dwell in the light of God's very presence, and behold the unveiled glory of his immediate face. Man is created in the image and likeness of God, and, as such, enthroned in the presence of the admiring intelligences of heaven, in dominion over all things, by a decree, the extensive meaning of which is only at length discovered, in the exaltation of the Second Man, in his universal dominion and eternal throne. In man, thus created, the moral likeness of God was inscribed in his moral nature, endowed with reason, conscience and will, and clothed with knowledge, righteousness, holiness, freedom and dominion; whilst the natural relations of the divine Persons to each other are shadowed forth in his generative and breathing nature; and the unity of the divine essence is attested by that of the nature, which, one in the first man, is propagated to his seed: shadows, these, which, however obscure, harbinger the light which shines in the second Adam and his body the church.

Seduced by Satan, man fell from honour, apostatized from holiness, and rebelled against God. The suspension of the stroke of justice was the announcement of perfections as yet undiscovered in the divine nature,—of love to the ungodly, of mercy to the guilty, and justice in harmony with forgiving grace; and the utterance of the promise with its gradually unfolding light, was a proclamation of that everlasting covenant in the provisions of which the moral nature of God and the relations of the Three, are so signally revealed to the veiled adoration of the creatures.

In the fulfilment of that covenant, the Son of God clothes himself in flesh and appears upon earth arrayed in a glory as of the only begotten of the Father. As the whole antecedent creative and providential administration of the Son was preliminary to his own personal entrance upon the stage, so all the other irradiations of the divine glory concentrate their light in his person, relations and work. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If the creation proclaims a Great First





Cause,—He by whom all things were made, and in whom they consist, announces the Father, that Cause. If the moral intelligences, angelic and human, in their endowments shadow forth the moral attributes of the Godhead,—those which shine in the Son are the very counterpart of the Father's perfections. If the law constitutes a mirror of those perfections in another form, that law shines in its most exalted majesty in the obedience of Christ; its excellence, in the righteousness which he wrought; and its justice, in the curse which he bore. The covenant of works attested the divine beneficence, proposing the gratuitous dispensation of eternal life, upon condition of the uncertain obedience of the creatures. How rich, then, the grace which the everlasting covenant reveals, bestowing, not merely eternal life, but sonship to God, membership in Christ, and joint inheritance with him in the kingdom and glory of God, upon the sole condition of the infallible righteousness of the very Son of God himself. The first man was of the earth, earthy; yet was counted worthy to be installed the official likeness of God. But the second man is himself the Lord from heaven. Himself the Second Person of the Trinity,—by nature the express image of the Father's Person,—and by the Father endowed with the Holy Spirit without measure,—in him thus dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily. In his person thus gloriously endowed,—in the purpose which brought him to earth, and his work here accomplished,—in his obedience to the law,—in his conquest of Satan, endurance of the curse, and ascension to heaven,—in the glory there possessed, and the dominion thence exercised,—in the organization of his church,—in his relation as her Head,—in the erection by her of a testimony to his word, the ingathering of the elect, the inheritance to which they are called, and the perdition of his enemies,—in the distinctive agency of the several Persons of the Godhead in the work of Grace,—in these various and wonderful forms have we the elements of that dispensation of light of which the Sun of righteousness is the source.

§ 2. *Messiah's kingdom.* Having by his obedience vindicated the perfection of the law, and fulfilled an everlasting righteousness, and by his sufferings and death atoned for sin, the Son of man

arose from the dead ascended to glory, and assumed the covenant throne, and that dominion over all creatures to which man was ordained, in his creation. Him "the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began."—Acts iii. 21.

Although thus enthroned in absolute and universal dominion, angels and principalities and powers being subject to him, the past ages of the administration of the Son of God have been in a great measure a time of the hiding of his power. Heretofore, he has been pleased to allow the depravity and wickedness of man to develop itself upon a gigantic scale, in a multitude of forms, through successive ages, and despite every variety of persuasive and restraining influences. Thus is developed in appalling form the evidence and measure of the malignant evil of man's sin, and the unworthiness and depravity of that race for whom God's love provided the blood of Calvary. Heretofore, of the adult population of the earth, the great multitude have lived in open rebellion against God, and died without hope.

What remains is veiled under the shadows of the future. But the lamp of prophecy discloses the dim outlines of the coming administration of Messiah's kingdom, and the triumphant consummation of his glorious reign. It is not for us "to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power."—Acts i. 7. But the fact is declared in the most unambiguous terms, that, deep as were the humiliation and shame of the incarnate Son in the days of his flesh, proportionately great shall be the exaltation, the dominion and glory, which he shall enjoy on this very earth which witnessed his temptations and quaked at his dying cry;—that proportionate to the preciousness of his atoning blood, and dignity of his Mediatorial person, will be the number of the trophies of his redeeming grace;—that although Satan may be permitted to deceive the world for a season, and even seem to maintain a doubtful struggle for the mastery of the nations and the defeat of the purposes of God and the grace of Messiah, his overthrow will be as complete as his pride and malice are great, and the reward of all his wiles





will be returned upon himself in utter discomfiture, eternal destruction and overwhelming shame. Without attempting to enter into the prophetic question, or to dogmatize on the subject, the following points may be stated, as clearly presented on the face of the sacred record.

1. The kingdom of Messiah on earth will be inaugurated in some manner as signal, and his throne be established in a sovereignty as emphatically announced, and as distinctly recognised, as though he himself should come in person, in the glory of the Father, to set it up. Of this we can only cite two or three points of the evidence:—"Thou sawest," says Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, "till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image (חִתָּה) was a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Of this vision Daniel gives the interpretation:—"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."—Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44. The date of this transaction is here given. It is to be in the time of the ten kingdoms which were to arise out of the Roman empire. The nature of the transaction is equally clear. Those kingdoms are destined to an overthrow sudden as the smiting of a stone.

Equally distinct and unequivocal is the parallel prophecy of the seventh chapter of Daniel. In the days of the little horn,—the papal power,—Daniel "beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit. . . . I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. . . . I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him."—Dan. vii. 9-14.

Of that man of sin and son of perdition, which is designated in Daniel's prophecy as the little horn, Paul says, respecting his own time, that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."—2 Thess. ii. 7, 8. In harmony with these testimonies is that of John in the Revelation:—"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."—Rev. xvi. 17-19. "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great. . . . Her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her. . . . And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."—Rev. xviii. 1, 2, 8, 21.

Without appeal to the many other corresponding scriptures, we take the following points to be abundantly manifest in these:—(1.) The Roman papal power will be the last of those anti-Christian kingdoms by which Satan's sceptre is exercised on the earth. The coming and kingdom of Christ are coincident, in time, with its utter overthrow. Its destruction is to be occasioned by that coming. (2.) That destruction will be sudden, violent and utter,—as the dashing of an image in pieces; as the



plunging of a millstone in the sea; as the consuming flame of Jehovah's breath. (3.) It will be accomplished in a manner signally impressive to the spectators. The shock of an earthquake of unparalleled violence, the overthrow of the cities of the nations, the mournings and wailings of the people and kings of the earth, and the triumphant Alleluias of God's people, are the attendant circumstances. (4.) The kingdom of Christ, then established, will never pass away. It may be administered under other forms of increasing glory; but that throne, once established, will be the final kingdom of earth, the eternal dominion of Immanuel. It "shall never be destroyed;" "and the kingdom shall not be left to other people," as the Persians yielded the sceptre to the Greeks, and they, again, to the Romans; "but it shall stand forever."—Dan. ii. 44.

2. A second point which is fully attested in the Scriptures is, that, under Messiah's reign thus established, the sceptre of grace will exercise an unlimited and undivided sway over the entire earth, subduing sin and blotting out the curse. Satan will be bound, man's depravity subdued, the idols abolished, ignorance dispelled, the curse taken off the earth, the fruitfulness of Eden restored, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. God declares by Jeremiah, "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."—Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Should any be disposed to limit this promise to Israel after the flesh, the language in respect to the Gentiles is equally strong:—"In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."—Isa.

§ 4. *All flesh shall be holy.*

xiv. 6-8. Again, says God to the Messiah, "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth."—Isa. xlix. 6. So, he says to the nations, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."—Isa. xlv. 22, 23. In short, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."—Hab. ii. 14.

In respect to such language as this, which presents itself everywhere in the Bible, there are two or three remarks which must commend themselves to the reverent students of that book:—(1.) These prophecies all unanimously point to one time, the time of the kingdom of the son of David. (2.) Were it the design of the Spirit of truth to describe a time in which holiness should be universal, the curse blotted out, and the world an unspotted trophy of God's redeeming grace, it would be utterly impossible to find stronger language to express it than that which is actually used. (3.) The statements of the Scriptures on the subject present themselves as standards by which we are to estimate the extent of the Redeemer's triumph over Satan, sin and the curse. It would seem as though that triumph would be incomplete if this earth, where Satan and sin have ruled so long, were not the scene of a reign of holiness as glorious as these prophecies describe.

3. Whether we count the thousand years, which are stated by John, (Rev. xx. 2,) as prophetic time, numbering three hundred and sixty-five thousand secular years, or regard them as a definite for an indefinite period immensely great,—the kingdom of Christ on earth shall have a continuance amply sufficient to vindicate the honour of God in respect to the brief centuries of Satan's dominion. The earth, blooming in an Eden fertility, and sustaining an innumerable population, will render to heaven a revenue of souls redeemed

§ 5. *The time protracted.*





which, as compared in number with the lost, will fully manifest the triumph of the Redeemer in respect to that aspect of his conflict with Satan, and victory over his malice. The throng which will stand before the Lamb in his glory, washed and made white in his blood, will be a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues:

"Then cometh the end." Blessed as are the subjects of the millennial sceptre, theirs is not the final inheritance of the saints.

*§ 8. Satan's last struggle.* Glorious as is the sovereignty then exercised by the

Prince of peace, and abject as will be Satan in chains, yet more glorious shall be the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and more signal his power and vengeance on the enemy. The happy scenes of the millennial age have no persuasive influence on Satan, to reconcile his heart to holiness, or subdue his hate against God. His own experience of the omnipotent power of the Son, holding him in bonds through all those ages, has not quelled his rebellion, or taught him to restrain his impotent rage. One more lesson will he serve to teach the adoring disciples in the school of the incarnate Word, before the mystery is finished. As a final illustration of the enormous and intolerable evil of sin, he is loosed out of his prison. Immediately he resumes his character of liar-seducer, and goes out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle. Whether he is permitted to induce a general apostasy of the subjects of Messiah, as some have imagined,—or whether, contemporaneous with his loosing from prison, the wicked dead will be raised, and permitted to give this final display of their unrelenting wickedness, as others have supposed,—a host is gathered, in number as the sand of the sea. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."—Rev. xx. 9, 10.

In immediate connection with the account which John gives

of this final overthrow and doom of Satan, he announces the last judgment, and the consummation of all things. That tremendous assize is heralded with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. And lo! the Son of man cometh in the fiery chariot of God. Thousand thousands stand before him, and ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto him. The chariots of God are twenty thousand; the Lord is among them: whilst all the mighty angels wait in his train. At the sound of his coming, his sleeping saints awake, incorruptible; and, with the living transformed, are caught up to meet him, with songs of praise and shouts of joy. The glory of the Father robes his person, the sceptre of the Father fills his hand, and the Father's throne is his seat of judgment. The wicked nations are cited to his tribunal, and in shrieking despair strive in vain to hide from the wrath of the Lamb. The legions of Satan in terror obey his omnipotent call, and recognise this as the time of their doom. Every creature appears before the Son of man, and every eye beholds the glory of the victim of Calvary. Displaying the wounds in his person, and recalling the days of his flesh, he claims his elect as his righteous and covenant reward. In them all creatures see his image,—their bodies fashioned like his glorious body, and robed in the image of his own revealed glory; their souls perfect in his holiness; their persons united to him by his Spirit, and clothed in garments washed in his blood, and their names recorded in his book of life. He says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. Sit ye, therefore, with me in my throne." And amid the admiring songs of the seraphic host, and the despairing rage of their enemies and his, the Judge receives the partakers of his sufferings and shame to be sharers of his throne and assessors in the judgment:—"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?"—1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

At that tribunal the elect angels appear. Of them, too, the second Man, the eternal Son, is the sovereign and judge. The



Father, who "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet," did so in order that "in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth."—Eph. i. 20-22, 10.

That blessed host is called before him. In his work of creation,—in his providential government, and his holy law,—in their own natures and history, and in those of the apostate angels,—in the nature and history of the first Adam and his race, and the second Adam and his redeemed, they have been adoring learners of the mystery and glory of the invisible God; and by Christ's Spirit have been upheld in faithfulness, and built up in growing holiness. And now by the touch of his golden sceptre are they confirmed in holiness, and sealed to eternal life.

The books of record of the deeds of the wicked are opened. The wickedness of their rebellions and sins is displayed. God's long-suffering and love are made manifest; and his justice proclaimed and approved by the holy ones;—and the Judge pronounces the doom:—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Driven from his presence, they are cast into the lake of fire, where the devil and the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." Sole monument of God's retributive wrath, that pit of woe will forever remain,—its accursed prisoners trophies of the power and justice of the Son of man,—as their wickedness testifies to the boundless depths of His compassion who died for such, and to the glory of the transforming grace by which the redeemed, by nature such as these, are fitted for heaven. Shut up in hell, death and the grave and the curse will be known no more.

Attended by saints and angels, principalities and powers,—accompanied with the trumpet of God, the harps of heaven and

§ 8. *The kingdom delivered to the Father.* the songs of universal praise,—will the triumph of the Conqueror of death and hell come to the throne of the Father. He there presents the angelic hosts,—monuments of his goodness and power,—and the redeemed,—trophies of his love,—all of whom, saints and angels, are elect of the Father, and beloved from everlasting. "Behold I and the children which thou hast given me." His angels are approved; his redeemed accepted; the Mediator of the covenant justified on its terms; and its finished work proclaimed. Then shall the Son also deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father. Not the throne of David; for that is his as David's Son. Not the sceptre of his grace, by which he is Prophet, Priest and King of his redeemed. That belongs to him as Head of the body,—it was purchased by him at the price of his blood, and sealed to him in the eternal covenant. But he resigns that sceptre, that throne and headship over all things, which was given to him in the covenant, as the vicegerent, the image and revealer, of the invisible God,—the Lord of all creatures on the Father's behalf. Nor does Immanuel cease to be the coequal Son. Having overcome, he sitteth forever with the Father in his throne,—the throne of God and the Lamb. But He, the Father,—who was known, before, only through the Son,—dwelling thenceforth in the new Jerusalem, admits his creatures into his own immediate presence; unveils his own face to their adoring view; and bestows upon them, with his own hand, the treasures of his love.

§ 9. *The new Jerusalem.* Purged by fire and renewed, the earth is fitted for the abode of God; and the holy city, new Jerusalem, comes down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. In the midst of its street flows the river of the water of life from the throne of God and the Lamb; and on either side of the river is the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. In it is no temple; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. Before the very throne itself the saints present their offerings and utter their praises. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall





be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." It is done.—The mystery of God manifested in the flesh is finished. The terms of the everlasting covenant are fulfilled, and its objects accomplished. The matchless glories of the divine perfections have been made known, and the creatures blessed in the knowledge. The wickedness of sin has been demonstrated; and the sovereignty and justice, the power and wisdom, the grace and wrath of the Father illustrated, by occasion thereof. Death is swallowed up in victory, the curse blotted out, life and immortality brought to light, and Eden restored.

What the revelations contained in the book of God then opened, they will know who shall have part in the marriage-supper of the Lamb. But of this we are assured:—There shall be no night there. Nor will they have need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon them, for the Lord God giveth them light, the glory of God doth lighten them, and the Lamb is their light. And they shall reign for ever and ever.

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name, for ever and ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.

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